

**Avonworth  
School District  
Athletic  
Department**

**ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**



### **Avonworth School District Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Avonworth School District is to empower students through authentic experiences to become innovative thinkers and creative contributors to our world.

#### **Belief Statements:**

1. Students' strengths and talents are nurtured in a safe and supportive environment.
2. The school district supports diversity, empathy, and respect.
3. Developing essential skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and communication prepares students to navigate a complex world.
4. Learning takes place within and beyond our school walls.
5. The school district and community partner for mutual benefit.

#### **Our Pillars:**

- Learn Together
- Be Kind
- Make a Difference
- Actions Matter
- You Belong

## ***MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF ATHLETIC PROGRAMS FOR THE AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT***

### **ORGANIZATION:**

Board of School Directors

Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Director of Fiscal Management

Facilities and Grounds Supervisor

High School Principal

Athletic Director

Middle School Principal

High School/ Middle School Assistant Principal

Athletic Trainer

Game Managers

Event Workers

### **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Avonworth School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or religion in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504.

ASD Website: [www.avonworth.k12.pa.us/](http://www.avonworth.k12.pa.us/)

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*"The most important thing in sports is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well." – Olympic Creed*

### **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MATERIAL CONTAINED WITHIN THE HANDBOOK**

All coaches are accountable for all material contained within this handbook. Coaches will be required to sign for receipt of their handbook and sign for acknowledgement of accountability. Any failure to follow protocol or violations of handbook procedures will be processed in accordance with School Board Policy.

# **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook has been developed to assist the coaching staff of the Avonworth School District in serving the students that elect to take part in the interscholastic athletic program. The Handbook contains athletic department procedures, regulations, and other information that will be helpful to coaches in administering, maintaining, and supervising the athletic program.

In addition to the materials presented in this handbook, all members of the coaching staff must familiarize themselves with the rules of the sports they coach, as well as the rules and regulations found in the constitution and by-laws of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

### **INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

The Board of School Directors believes that the purpose of an interscholastic athletic program is to provide learning experiences that will contribute to the personal, physical, and psychological development of the individual student athlete. These learning experiences will be consistent with the educational goals of Avonworth School District as outlined in its Mission and Vision statement and will complement the academic program of the District. Hence, participation in interscholastic athletics can serve an important role in meeting the needs of secondary level students within the total educational process.

The Avonworth School District interscholastic athletic program is both voluntary and competitive and will be designed to meet the needs of student-athletes. In order to participate, student-athletes must be physically healthy, academically qualified, and willing to make a significant personal commitment to maximize the development of their knowledge, skills, and attitudes relative to the particular sport.

All athletic teams will operate under the leadership supervision of an effective coaching staff committed to accomplishing the educational goals of the school system. Members of the coaching staff will employ safe and educationally sound techniques designed to actively promote the development of the student athlete as a whole person. Also, coaches will be expected to continually improve their coaching techniques through participation in appropriate professional development programs.

The school administration, especially the athletic director and the secondary principal, will provide a supportive environment for the coaches and student-athletes at all levels. All district administrators will be committed to the philosophy stated herein.

The interscholastic athletic program will be increasingly competitive as student's progress from the junior high/middle school through the junior varsity to the varsity levels. The earlier levels will serve as developmental programs for the more advanced levels. Team goals will reflect these goals. Varsity coaches will work with junior varsity and junior high/middle school coaches to coordinate the developmental aspects of the program in each particular sport.

At the Avonworth ***junior high/middle school*** level of interscholastic competition, coaches will place a strong emphasis on instruction and on maintaining sufficient levels of participation in that sport to allow the individual student athlete to develop their athletic potential. Participation and development of skills in a sport will be valued above the winning of contests. The needs of the team should be balanced with the developmental needs of the individual team members. The number of participants accepted for membership on a team, however, must support this commitment to high levels of instruction and participation.

At the ***junior varsity*** level, instruction and the development of individual skills for all student-athletes will continue to be emphasized. However, team success in inter-school competition will also be valued. Student-athletes will become increasingly aware of the importance of teamwork and a positive attitude toward team success. The number of student-athletes selected for the team will allow the coaches not only to instruct and assist the participants in their individual development but also to teach teamwork as an important factor in interscholastic competition.

At the ***varsity*** level of interscholastic competition, coaches will have the dual responsibility of fostering individual skill development and achieving team success. To achieve this end, the most effective student-athletes as judged by the coaching staff, regardless of grade level, will be given the opportunity to further develop their athletic abilities and to participate at the most advanced levels of interscholastic athletic competition. Coaching emphasis will be placed on helping the members of the team to work together and to develop a strong desire to attain the highest possible levels of team success.

The Superintendent is directed by the Board of School Directors to develop, disseminate, maintain, and periodically revise the administrative procedures, including but not limited to handbooks for coaches and student-athletes, necessary to implement the intent of this policy as well as an annual evaluation process for coaches. Appropriate professional development programs for coaches relative to this policy and the above procedures will also be provided.

## **ATHLETIC OBJECTIVES**

The athletic program is an integral part of the educational process of the Avonworth School District. It promotes a desire in our students and community to take part in sports either as a participant or a spectator.

Our aim is to develop competitive student-athletes but not to lose sight of educational values such as sportsmanship, citizenship, health, character education and scholastic attainment. The athletic programs should also promote school morale and provide an additional source of self-esteem for our students.

### **ATHLETIC PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

1. To complement the primary function of the school, which is instruction.
2. To represent the Avonworth School District and its interscholastic athletic program in a positive and constructive manner.
3. To strive for playing excellence that will produce successful teams while promoting sportsmanship at the highest level.
4. To provide opportunities for the student's:
  - Physical, mental and emotional growth and development.
  - Acquisition and development of special skills in activities of each student's choice.
  - Development of desirable social traits such as loyalty, cooperation, and fair play.
  - Development of leadership skills.
  - Achievement of goals.
  - Worthy use of leisure time.
  - Practice of self-discipline, self-motivation, and fair play.
  - Commitment to team goals over individual effort and recognition.

### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide opportunities to learn games and improve playing skills to the best of their abilities.
2. To develop physical fitness and desirable health, hygiene and safety habits.
3. To provide opportunities to make real friends with team members and widen circles of friends by meeting student-athletes from opposing teams.
4. To provide opportunities to observe and practice good sportsmanship.



5. To realize that athletic competition is a privilege that carries definite responsibilities with it.
6. To reap the benefits of the special type of discipline that comes from participation and competition.
7. To understand the concept of teamwork and the individual's role as a team member.

### **COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY**

1. The community should realize that control of and responsibility for school athletics rests entirely with the school authorities.
2. School athletics should furnish a recreational opportunity for the general public as long as a community is willing to see that the program is conducted solely for the benefit of student competition and student spectators.
3. The community should judge the success of the season on the number of participants, the number of spectators, new skills acquired and good citizenship and good sportsmanship taught, rather than on the number of games won or lost.
4. The community should constantly keep in mind that an athletic contest is part of the school program and therefore is governed by the same philosophy.

### **SCHOOL AND STUDENT-BODY REMINDERS**

1. Athletics should be educational.
2. Athletics should promote pride in one's school and community.
3. Proper student interest should be promoted.
4. All visiting schools should be treated as guests.
5. School policy should be consistently applied so as not to provide student-athletes with special privileges.
6. Sportsmanship, fair play and good school citizenship should be the goals of all student-athletes.
7. Every effort should be made to provide the best coaching, facilities and equipment possible within the economic constraints of the school district's budget.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The School Board of Directors shall set policy with regard to the conducting of the athletic programs within the Avonworth School District and shall make all decisions as are required by law.

### **THE PRINCIPAL AND ATHLETICS DIRECTOR**

The Principal and Athletics Director in each school, in all matters pertaining to the interscholastic athletic programs of the school, is responsible to the P.I.A.A. They may delegate some of these powers but such delegation shall not relieve them of responsibility for any infraction by their school, of the Constitution and By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.

#### *Duties and Responsibilities:*

1. To have control over all athletic relations in which the school participates. This applies to interscholastic sports for both boys and girls.
2. To sanction all contests in which the school participates and to notify the Executive Director of the P.I.A.A. within ten days if the school has entered a contest which has not been sanctioned.
3. To exclude any contestant who, because of inappropriate conduct, would not represent the school in a becoming manner and, to exclude any contestant who has suffered illness or injury until that contestant is pronounced physically fit by the school physician or, if none employed, by another licensed physician.
4. To be responsible for the treatment of all visitors and officials attending contests conducted by the school. Penalties may be imposed upon a member school whose principal fails to provide reasonable protections for officials and visitors at home games. If a game is played at a neutral place, the Principals of the participating schools shall be held jointly responsible for this protection. In such cases, penalties may be imposed upon either or both schools.

5. To be responsible for certifying in writing the eligibility of all contestants in accordance with the By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.
6. The Principal/AD shall have such other powers concerning interscholastic athletics within the school as are in keeping with the growth and needs of the school and which are consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.

### **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

Avonworth High School is fortunate to have the opportunity to partner with Northgate School District to offer students additional opportunities to participate in school-sponsored sports. Students interested in participating in a sport sponsored by the co-operative district must still meet all Avonworth requirements for athletic competition. The sports sponsored in the co-op are as follows:

#### **Northgate:**

- Coed Varsity Swimming
- Coed Middle School Swimming

#### **Avonworth:**

- Boys' and Girls' JV/Varsity Soccer
- Wrestling
- Coed Track and Field

#### **Our Lady of the Sacred Heart:**

- Boys' JV/ Varsity Volleyball

Transportation will be provided to Northgate for scheduled practices (activity bus numbers will be announced at the beginning of the school year). Northgate will provide a bus from Avonworth for all away competitions.

## **SECTION I. COACHES**

### **WHY DO YOU COACH?**

Although a coach has their own specific reasons for coaching, the main reason should be to take a group of young people and develop their individual and collective skills to the maximum of their abilities. In addition, athletics as an extension of the classroom provides a venue to educate students socially, emotionally and mentally through the context of sport. Student-athletes who are better players and better persons at the conclusion of their seasons or at the end of their careers than they were at the start have played for a successful coach, regardless of wins or losses.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOU**

1. To serve as a role model for your student-athletes. Never underestimate the influence you have on the young people in your charge.
2. To give an honest effort. To strive to do your best as you expect your student-athletes to do their best.
3. To remember that how you treat and develop your student-athletes is more important than how many games you win.
4. Although participation in numerous school activities is encouraged for all students, it is understood that once a student-athlete commits to you the coach, and their teammates in that season of their participation as a member of the team, consequences for failure to abide by team rules may be implemented by the head coach. All rules and consequences shall be pre-approved by the Athletic Director/ Building Principal and should be included in your handbook/rules packet distributed prior to the season.
5. To be supportive of the entire athletic program. Your student-athletes do appreciate it when you watch them compete in a sport other than yours.
6. To conduct your program in an ethical manner.
7. To keep athletics in perspective. To remember that although athletics is important, it is but a small component of a student's total education.
8. To have fun. It is indeed possible to work hard, be intense, and still enjoy every minute of it.
9. To be open-minded and receptive to recommendations and constructive criticism which you may receive from the Athletic Director or school district

## **WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT AND SCHOOL DISTRICT**

1. To provide you with the encouragement, support, and resources necessary to develop the program.
2. To remember that how you treat and develop your student-athletes is more important than how many games you win.
3. To conduct the overall sport program in an ethical manner.
4. To be open-minded and receptive to recommendations and constructive criticism which the school district may receive from you.
5. To keep athletics in perspective. To remember that although athletics is important, it is but a small component of a student's total education.
6. To provide you with opportunities and recommendations to help you grow as a coach. To offer criticism in a private setting.
7. To support you against unfair and unfounded criticism and attacks.

## **COACHES CODE OF ETHICS**

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. The student-athlete's welfare should be uppermost at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS):

1. **The coach** shall be aware that they have a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
2. **The coach** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
3. **The coach** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco use.
4. **The coach** shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact

with players.

5. **The coach** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct their program in harmony with the total school program.
6. **The coach** shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
7. **The coach** shall exert their influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with students, community, booster clubs, and administrators.
8. **The coach** shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
9. **Before and after contests**, coaches for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.
10. **The coach** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.
11. **The coach** shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association

### **COACHES AND ATHLETICS PERSONNEL DUTIES (LEGAL)**

Coaches have both a moral and legal obligation to protect the student-athletes in their charge. While the moral obligations are extremely important, the legal ones are equally important when it comes to determining liability in a legal case against a coach. There are duties coaches need to address if they are in fact going to protect their student-athletes and in so doing protect themselves and the school district. Coaches today not only must know what their routine duties are in relation to their job, but also they must know what their legal duties are.

Legal duties are defined as the responsibility of a coach to take reasonable care of their student-athletes. A coach must provide the safest environment possible in their specific situation.

In order to have a successful lawsuit against a coach or school district, the plaintiff must prove that all four elements of a tort are met. The four elements are 1) That a duty exists, 2) there has been a breach of that duty, 3) the breach of duty was the direct cause of the injury, and 4) there was in fact injury or damage. Without the identification of the duty, the first element, the other three are meaningless.

Several obligations or duties have been identified as absolute requirements for coaches and athletics personnel. These standards have evolved as a result of various case law proceedings and legal judgments against individuals and school districts.

1. **Duty to Plan** – This is a comprehensive requirement that transcends all other duties. Inherent in this duty is the need to continually conduct focused analyses and to develop responsive strategies that prevent or reduce injury and loss in the following areas: coaching competence; medical screening; appropriate activities that consider age, maturity and environmental conditions; facility and equipment evaluation and improvement; injury response; warnings to student-athletes and their families; insurance of student-athletes; child advocacy in cases of alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) or family neglect or abuse. Plans and policies should be committed to paper and should be rigorously implemented unless dangerous conditions prevent implementation. Plans and policies should be retained in safe storage. Negligence can be alleged when an injury loss results from no planning, inadequate planning or when plans are developed but ignored.
2. **Duty to Instruct Properly** – Athletic practices must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill and capability. Instruction must move from simple to complex and unknown to known. Coaches must be properly prepared to provide appropriate and sequential instruction and to identify and avoid dangerous practices or conditions. Instruction must demonstrate appropriate and safe technique and must include warnings about unsafe techniques and prohibited practices.
  - 2a. **Duty to Condition Properly** – Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning, regimens that prepare student-athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities. Consideration must be given to weather, maturational and readiness factors.
3. **Duty to Maintain Safe Playing Conditions** – Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury inherent in defective equipment or hazardous environments. Courts have held athletic supervisors responsible to improve unsafe environments and repair or remove defective equipment or disallow student-athlete's access. In addition, weather conditions must be considered. Student-athletes should not be subjected to intense or prolonged conditioning during periods of extreme heat and humidity or when frostbite may be a factor. In addition, a plan for monitoring and responding to dangerous weather conditions is necessary. Building codes and laws must be observed and implemented with respect to capacity, ventilation, air filtration and lighting.
  - 3a. **Duty to Select, Train and Supervise Coaches** – Athletic administrators will

be expected to ensure coaches are capable of providing safe conditions and activities.

4. **Duty To Provide Proper Equipment** – Coaches and athletic administrators must ensure student-athletes are properly equipped with clean, durable and safe equipment. This is especially important for protective equipment, which must carry a *National Operating Commission on Safety in Athletic Equipment* (NOCSAE) certification and must be checked for proper fit and wearing. Student-athletes must wear protective equipment any time they are exposed to the full rigors of contact in practice or competition. Selection of equipment must also consider the age and maturity of the athletes.
  - 4a. Duty to Provide Proper Transportation – In general, bonded, commercial carriers should be used for out of town transportation. Self or family transportation for local competition may be allowable if parents have adequate insurance coverage for team members other than their family members. The age and maturity of student-athletes should always be considered when allowing student-athletes to use public/self-transportation to travel to a local contest.
5. **Duty to Match Athletes** – Student-athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity, skill, age, size and speed. Mismatches should be avoided in all categories.
6. **Duty to Assess Athletes' Readiness for Practice and Competition** – Athletic administrators and coaches are required to assess the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of student-athletes. Student-athletes must be medically screened in accordance with state association regulations before participating in practice or competition. Moreover, some children may require specialized medical assessment to ascertain the existence of congenital disorders or the existence of a physical condition that predisposes the student- athlete to injury. In addition, injured student-athletes who require the services of a physician may not return to practice or competition without written permission of the physician. Plans should become policy documents and updated regularly by administrators, coaches and experts in specific areas (e.g.; equipment, emergency response etc.) A new area of concern that may grow from this duty is the difficulty of assessing the readiness of handicapped children who are referred for practice or competition under the *Americans with Disabilities Act or the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975*. In these cases, it is imperative that medical and multi-disciplinary team approval and recommendation be obtained before a handicapped student becomes a candidate for practice and competition.
  - 6a. Duty to Ensure Athletes are covered by Injury Insurance – Athletic administrators and coaches must screen student-athletes to ensure that family and /or school insurance provides a basic level of medical coverage. Student-athletes should not be allowed to participate without injury insurance.



7. **Duty to Supervise** – A coach must be physically present, provide competent instruction, structure practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players, prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner. Supervision pertains to both primary and secondary areas. This duty requires supervisors (coaches) to ensure that facilities are locked and that students are denied access when a competent staff member cannot be physically present to supervise. This duty may also require coaches to control reckless player behaviors. Supervision responsibilities also pertain to athletic administrators who are expected to be able to supervise coaching staff members competently. In addition, school administrators or game managers are expected to supervise contests to ensure that spectators do not create an unsafe or disruptive environment. A further extension of this duty is the need to supervise the condition, safe usage, maintenance and upkeep of equipment and facilities.
8. **Duty to Warn** – Coaches are required to warn parents and student-athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death. This warning should be issued in writing and both student-athletes and parents should be required to provide written certification of their comprehension. Multimedia sources of warnings to players and parents are recommended.
9. **Duty to Provide Emergency Care** – Coaches are expected to be able to administer approved, prioritized, standard first aid procedures in response to a range of traumatic injuries within their knowledge base.
  - 9a. **Duty To Develop An Emergency Response Plan** – Athletic administrators and coaches must develop site-specific plans for managing uninjured team members while emergency care is being administered to an injured student-athlete. In addition, plans must be in place to: ensure access to a stocked first aid kit, spine board and other emergency response equipment; access to a telephone; ensure a timely call to EMS; to expedite rapid access by EMS to the injured athlete by stationing coaches or team members at driveways, parking lots, entry doors and remote hallways.

**Foreseeability** is a common term found in litigation related to sport today. A prudent coach should be able to foresee the potential danger that may occur if activity is continued in that facility, or with that equipment, or in that situation, and should take action to prevent the activity from continuing without correcting the problem.

Sources: Coalition of Americans to Protect Sports  
(CAPS) Pennsylvania School Boards Association  
(PSBA)

## **RISK-MANAGEMENT**

It is the responsibility of the coaching staff to assist in offering a program that is in the best interest of the athletes in terms of their personal health and safety. A sound

program in risk-management specific to the sport being coached must be developed.

## **BUDGET RESPONSIBILITIES**

The head coach of each sport is responsible for the accurate and timely presentation of a budget for their sport. Because the Department of Education requires school districts to submit their budgets for the next school year by the end of December of the current school year, coaches will be asked to calculate and estimate their equipment and supply needs by the end of their season of the current school year for the following school year.

A Budget Worksheet will be sent to each head coach. Coaches will need to submit their estimated equipment needs before December 1st in order for the athletic administration to process and develop the athletic budget for the following year. Preliminary budgets are due to the Business Manager by December 15th and final budgets are approved in May.

It is important in budget preparation to be accurate in every detail to ensure the equipment requested is the equipment received. Detail regarding manufacturer, model number, amount, sizes, numbering and other specifications will insure delivery of equipment ordered.

In addition, not all equipment may be purchased that is requisitioned. Several factors dictate the ability to purchase all requisitioned items. Coaches should submit all anticipated needs but may be asked to prioritize if necessary.

Management of the budget is the joint responsibility of the coach and the Athletic Director. Coaches' record-keeping must be accurate. All equipment and supply orders must go through the Athletic Director and the Purchase Order process. Coaches should avoid making purchases out of their own pocket. Any equipment purchased by the coach for use in their program becomes property of the school district.

In addition, no staff member will be reimbursed for expenditures spent out of pocket. You may not use a personal credit card or your own cash and expect reimbursement from the school district unless you receive permission from the Athletic Director to do so.

## **CAMPS/CLINICS**

Coaches may serve as directors or staff members for camps and clinics attended by their student-athletes or potential student-athletes for which fees are charged and for which the coaches receive remuneration for their efforts. However, coaches are responsible to make clear public communication to student-athletes and their parents stating that attendance in any such camp or clinic will not guarantee a student-athlete any privilege in regard to their relationship with the coach's Avonworth sports team.

## **CUSTODIANS AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL**

Custodians and maintenance personnel perform a vital service to athletics. Well-maintained playing and practice facilities do not happen by accident. These people deserve our gratitude and respect. Try to accommodate their needs as much as possible.

## **DUAL RELATIONSHIP**

It is possible that a coach may be asked to provide private instruction to an athlete either on a voluntary or compensatory basis. If a coach enters into such a relationship while also being in a position, or potentially being in a position, to make decisions regarding that athlete's selection to a District interscholastic athletic team or that athlete's assignment of playing time on that team, a "dual relationship" would exist. It should be apparent that such a relationship is ripe with potential dangers for any coach. Certainly, at the very least, having such an arrangement with an athlete on a private basis would leave the coach open to charges of favoritism in regard to treatment received by the athlete while a member of the District team. **Therefore, such private coaching relationships - either voluntary or compensatory - are highly discouraged.**

## **FACILITY MANAGEMENT**

Prior to the start of the season, and each day thereafter, inspect the facilities to be used by your team. Note any conditions in need of repair and report them to the athletic office and buildings and grounds dept. Requests for routine preparations for facilities specific to your sport are to be made to the buildings and grounds dept and the athletic director. During the season, periodic inspections of facilities are to be made and any problems reported immediately. Requests for maintenance are to be made in writing. Coaches are responsible to assist the custodial staff in maintaining building security. Doors are to be checked and locked and lights should be turned out if you are the last to be in the building. Team members are never to wear cleated shoes in

the building. Team rooms are to be used if provided, and physical education lockers are not to be used if a team room is being utilized.

- **Weight Room** Strength training has become an integral part of athletics. In addition to enhancing performance, it provides additional protection to athletes against injury. Studies have proven that stronger athletes have fewer injuries, and those injured may be less severely affected. The weight room is available for use by Avonworth athletes/athletics teams both during their sports season and in their off- season. Students and teams are expected to follow publicized guidelines posted in the weight room. Coaches should schedule team times through the Athletic Director with facility use. Priority will be given to in-season teams wishing to use the weight room. Coaches are encouraged to request set times/dates for weight room use by their teams. Athletes are to be supervised at all times in the weight room. The doors should never be unlocked without staff present. You must provide a weight lifting program to the Athletic Director. The weight room should be left clean and tidy. Due to liability issues, anyone other than current students or staff are not permitted to use the weight room facility.

## **HAZING**

**Hazing is not an accepted practice by the Avonworth School District and cannot be tolerated or condoned in the athletic program.**

### **Pennsylvania Hazing Law – TITLE 24. EDUCATION** **CHAPTER 20. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANTIHAZING LAW**

[P.S.] 5352. Definitions

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“HAZING.” Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by an institution of higher education. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. For purposes of this definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with

or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.

*"Institution of Higher Education" Or "Institution"*: Any public or private institution within this Commonwealth authorized to grant an associate degree or higher academic degree.

#### § 5353. Hazing prohibited

Any person who causes or participates in hazing commits a misdemeanor of the third degree.

#### § 5354. Enforcement by institution

- (a) Anti-hazing Policy: Each institution shall adopt a written anti-hazing policy and, pursuant to that policy, shall adopt rules prohibiting students or other persons associated with any organization operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the institution from engaging in any activity which can be described as hazing.
- (b) Enforcement and Penalties:
  - (1) Each institution shall provide a program for the enforcement of such rules and shall adopt appropriate penalties for violations of such rules to be administered by the person or agency at the institution responsible for the sanctioning or recognition of such organizations.
  - (2) Such penalties may include the imposition of fines, the withholding of diplomas or transcripts pending compliance with the rules or pending payment of fines and the imposition of probation, suspension or dismissal.
  - (3) In the case of an organization which authorizes hazing in blatant disregard of such rules, penalties may also include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on campus property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the institution.
  - (4) All penalties imposed under the authority of this section shall be in addition to any penalty imposed for violation of section 3 or any of the criminal law of this State or for violation of any other institutional rule to which the violator may be subject.
  - (5) Rules adopted pursuant hereto shall apply to acts conducted on or off campus whenever such acts are deemed to constitute hazing.

### **DEFINITION AND PERSPECTIVE**

Hazing in high school sports programs is variously defined as a rite of passage, initiation or test of resilience that serves to authorize, permit or validate membership or status in athletics or activities. Other definitions contained in various state law prohibitions include: Recklessly or intentionally endangering the health or safety of a student, or inflicting bodily injury on a student in connection with or as a condition of membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority or student body, regardless of whether the student so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the activity.

**Examples include (but not limited to):**

- Requiring candidates to steal, vandalize or commit law violations;
- Shaving, cutting hair or marking the body of candidates;
- Requiring public behaviors that provoke ridicule or sanctions by law enforcement and school authorities;
- Requiring candidates to dress or appear in a manner that proves public ridicule;
- Requiring consumption of noxious food substances, drugs or alcohol;
- Physical punishments or extended exercises;
- Requiring candidates to endure extreme temperature environments;
- Requiring candidates to assume a painful position for an extended period;
- Sexual activity or simulated sexual activity;
- Deprivation of sleep;
- Simulations of dangerous acts that cause fear or mental anxiety, regardless of the intention or the actual danger inherent;
- Creating any safety risk for a candidate including involuntary restraint;
- Mandated servitude; and
- Demeaning or profane references to the candidate.

**INJURIES AND DEATH**

Regrettably, injuries and death have resulted from these practices. As a result, these tragedies have resulted in public protests, expressions of outrage and litigation. Among the more proactive efforts has been development of Web sites that are available to any person who desires to learn more about current trends in legislation, litigation and public responses.

The Web sites are: [www.stophazing.com](http://www.stophazing.com) and [www.hazing.hanknuwer.com](http://www.hazing.hanknuwer.com).

**LEGISLATIVE TRENDS**

Forty-two states have enacted legislation that prohibits hazing and institutes a range of

penalties and sanctions for hazing violations. These include: Definitions of hazing and planning that contribute to hazing as a serious misdemeanor or felony, depending on the severity of the incident and injury or loss suffered by the victim(s).

- 1) Mandatory fines of various levels related to the severity of the violation and court judgments.
- 2) Mandates to school districts to develop local policies designed to prevent or intervene in hazing activities.
- 3) Mandatory fines for schools that fail to develop hazing prevention policies.
- 4) Mandatory requirements to report hazing and legislative immunity for those who report acts of hazing.
- 5) Loss of state financial assistance to schools or districts that do not enact local policies and measures to prevent or curtail hazing.
- 6) Legislative permission and encouragement to institute lawsuits in civil or federal courts.
- 7) Mandatory expulsions from high schools and universities for violators found guilty of hazing.
- 8) Legislation that invalidates traditional defenses, such as consent, willingness, tradition, unawareness and no-harm.

## **LITIGATION**

The legislative enactments cited above, coupled with the rapid increase in litigation and legal judgments, strongly indicate that hazing is no longer an accepted practice in high school sports programs.

Federal courts have defined the mission of schools as:

- To educate all students, with the emphasis on all;
- To provide a safe and orderly environment for students to learn in, and
- To protect the health, safety and welfare of all students.

School Districts are held to a higher standard when it comes to the protection and safety of students. Coaches must discuss and have an anti-hazing policy within their team rules and regulations. It is incumbent upon all teachers, coaches, administrators and parents to educate all children on the dangers and inappropriateness of hazing in any form.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC PERSONNEL**

The athletic personnel have the responsibility to research and understand the anti-hazing laws that his or her state has enacted and to determine whether the Board of Education, state association or National Association of Independent Schools has adopted any policy on hazing or sexual harassment. Coaches' handbooks, student and athletic handbooks, and codes of conduct for student-athletes should reflect these policies and implement strict prohibitions and consequences for participating in any hazing activities. Furthermore, the issue of hazing should be addressed in parent meetings and included in warning and prohibition statements that are signed by parents and student-athletes to ensure understanding.

### **SUMMARY**

Hazing has long been tolerated as a "necessary evil" and a community norm among high school athletics teams. As a result of recent serious injuries and deaths, this form of demeaning and dangerous abuse of power has been largely rejected as incompatible with human rights and educationally sound practices.

**Simply stated, hazing cannot and will not be tolerated in the Avonworth School District athletic program.**

### **Web sites:**

1. [www.hazing.hanknuwer.com](http://www.hazing.hanknuwer.com)
2. [www.stophazing.org](http://www.stophazing.org)
3. [www.hazingstudy.org](http://www.hazingstudy.org)
4. [www.hazing.fsu.edu](http://www.hazing.fsu.edu)
5. [www.hazingprevention.org](http://www.hazingprevention.org)
6. [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)
7. [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)
8. [www.niaaa.org](http://www.niaaa.org)
9. [www.hazing.cornell.edu/issues/resources.html](http://www.hazing.cornell.edu/issues/resources.html)



## **HOLIDAY AND SUNDAY PRACTICES**

Practice and athletic contests during scheduled school closings such as non-religious holidays or winter/spring break are permitted with approval by the Athletic Director prior to the practice or contest. Practices on Sundays are permitted.

## **INFLUENCING BEHAVIOR**

Among the fundamental skills of coaching is the process of influencing a student-athlete's behavior. While this is a complex process, it is generally agreed that reward, extinction (ignoring the behavior) or 'punishment' are techniques that a coach may use to influence a student-athlete's behavior. Depending upon the circumstance, all may be effective tools for the coach to employ.

**However, the practice of a coach assigning physical activity (running laps, doing pushups, etc.) as 'punishment' or as a consequence for misbehavior or poor performance is not supported by the District.** While such a strategy may still be found in some areas of athletics, it seems counterproductive to the objectives of a sound interscholastic athletic program. Assigning such activity as a consequence may cause student-athletes to resent physical activity, something we want them to learn to enjoy throughout their lives. Instead of assigning physical activity as a consequence, it is recommended that other techniques be used to influence a student-athlete's behavior. Private conversations with the coaching staff, suspensions and calls to parents/guardians are possible strategies that are recommended.

## **IN-SEASON TEAM MANAGEMENT**

### **GENERAL SUPERVISION OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Concern regarding liability of school districts and those persons hired by school districts to coach and supervise students in extra-curricular activities has increased the accountability of supervision.

Coaches must know where their student-athletes are and what they are doing at all times. Rules of behavior are to be developed and presented to the student-athletes so there is no question of the coaches' expectations. These rules are to include, but not be limited to, pre and post practice activities, locker room and showers behavior, proper etiquette while traveling to and from activities, off campus training routines and appropriate behavior during competition.

Coaches must not isolate themselves from their teams prior to or following practice and game situations. Coaches are to remain with their student-athletes in the building or at the pickup/drop-off point until all have left the premises.

**Coaches are not to give their keys to student-athletes at any time.** Student managers may use coaches' keys during practice sessions, but managers are not to have their own keys. Lost keys must be reported to the athletic office immediately.

Specific rules for locker room behavior must be developed by the coach, distributed to the team members and should include prohibition of roughhousing, throwing of objects, and hazing, bullying or harassing of other players. In addition, student-athletes are to be reminded that spikes and cleats are not to be worn anywhere in any district building, including the locker room. Student-athletes must be reminded of their responsibility to turn off showers when finished and to respect the facility in general. The coach will be the last person to leave after practice and/or game.

School district policies regarding tobacco, drugs, and alcohol apply equally to coaches and student-athletes at all district sponsored activities. **Coaches are not to use tobacco products or to consume alcohol while supervising students.**

## **TEAM ROSTER**

Immediately following the selection of the team and the issuing of equipment, each head coach will prepare a roster and submit it to the athletic department. The roster is to include information important to the identification of each student-athlete, such as, uniform number, position/event, class in school, height, weight, and other information particular to your sport. The roster is to include team captains, if assigned, managers and assistant coaches. These rosters will be distributed to the media and opponent schools to assist them in the coverage and reporting of our athletic teams. No equipment or uniforms shall be issued to any student with an existing obligation.

## **PRACTICE SESSIONS**

Practice sessions must be conducted much the same as teaching a class – the athletic venue is the coaches' classroom. Attendance is to be taken every day of practice (duty to supervise). Records kept must be accurate in terms of date and time. The "lesson plan" (duty to plan) must contain as much detail as necessary to adequately explain the day's activities. Care is to be taken to outline warm-up activities, instruction periods, drill sessions, scrimmage times, water breaks, rest periods, and warm-down activities. Coaches are to avoid the use of terminology such as "suicides, back-breaker, etc." that may become a problem in the event of an injury or accident. In addition, the term "punishment" should never be used to reflect a consequence toward a student-athlete or as motivation. Except on occasion practice time is to be limited to two hours, excluding time required for dressing and showering. Student-athletes should never practice alone. A coaching staff member must be the first to arrive and the last to

leave. Records must be maintained throughout the season. Such records include: attendance, practice times, and evaluation forms.

Coaches are to develop and distribute a tentative practice schedule. The schedule is to be distributed to the student-athletes at the pre-season meeting or the first practice session. Coaches must make the student-athletes aware that the schedule is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Saturday and holiday practices are to be limited to allow student-athletes time for family activities. Such practices should not exceed 2 hours of time. Parents and athletes should be made aware (during pre-season meetings) that practices and games will be held over holiday breaks and athletes are required to attend during the break. **By PIAA rule, no practices (or contests) may be scheduled for more than a total of six days in any calendar week.** Sunday practices/contests are allowed, but must keep in line with the 6 per calendar week regulation.

In the event of a severe weather alert or severe weather conditions during practice, coaches will either be advised by the Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer or charged to make a decision themselves whether to continue practice and about the safety procedures to be followed. When severe weather alerts or conditions affect a contest situation, the Avonworth Game Site manager, Athletic Trainer and/ PIAA or officials will make the decision as to whether or not to continue.

Coaches of Fall sports need to be aware of temperature and humidity conditions during the pre-season practice times which may be dangerous to student-athletes engaged in strenuous activity. Under such conditions, special precautions must be observed. If not carefully watched the student-athlete may be susceptible to heat fatigue, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke. It is advisable to alternate periods of exercise with periods of rest during hot weather. It is important to replace the water the body loses through perspiration with periodic and frequent water breaks. It is important for the coaches to observe their student-athletes for signs of lethargy, inattention, awkwardness, or unusual fatigue. Symptoms of salt and water depletion may include sluggishness. If any of these symptoms are observed, the activity should be stopped. These symptoms are most likely to occur when the temperature is above 80 degrees and the humidity is 70% or higher. Coaches concerned about weather conditions should consult the certified athletic trainer.

Coaches of Winter sports should be aware of weather conditions before sending student-athletes outside.

## **Practice Session Risk Management**

The designated team physician and/or athletic training staff have a primary responsibility in managing the risks associated with athletic activity. They are authorized to alter **or** stop any practice situation that they deem unsafe.

## **ALUMNI PRACTICING WITH CURRENT DISTRICT STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Alumni and withdrawn high school students are **NOT** permitted to participate in practices, inter-school practices, scrimmages, and/or contests. However, in sports other than wrestling and football, alumni are permitted to compete against a high school team in a clearly defined alumni contest, but this will count towards the team's maximum number of competitions. If former students wish to work with the high school team in the capacity of coach, then the procedures for volunteer coaches will apply.

REFER to ARTICLE XII in the PIAA By-Laws at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org).

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

A team coach should establish and publish, with the approval and consent of the Principal and/or Athletic Director, reasonable rules that complement those instituted by the District, the schools, and the athletic department. This should be presented to athletes and parents prior to the start of the season. Some suggested code of conduct points:

### □ School Behavior and Citizenship:

Student-athletes are expected to conform to the general code of behavior for the building they attend. Violations of that code that result in in-school or out-of-school suspensions will affect a student-athlete's participation. When a student has been suspended out-of-school, the student may not visit any District campus during the duration of the suspension, nor may the student participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic practices or competitions. Students may resume participation in extracurricular activities on the day they resume school. When a student is suspended in-school, participation in extracurricular activities will also be restricted. Students may resume participation on the day following the completion of the in-school suspension. A coach may set a more restrictive rule if missing practice influences preparation for participation in competition.

### □ Sportsmanship:

As a PIAA member school, we are committed to the goal that sportsmanship be recognized as an important part of interscholastic athletics. Sportsmanship is

generally defined as the overt display of respect for the rules of the sport as well as for all players, coaches, officials and spectators in attendance. Avonworth student-athletes, when part of any team activity, are expected to behave in a way demonstrating fair play, ethics and integrity. Any actions or comments which are intended to taunt, bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others in the athletic arena are not acceptable. Student-athletes exhibiting such behavior will be addressed by the coach and may be consequence by a reduction in participation, suspension or dismissal from the team.

#### □ Hazing:

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any sports team recognized by the Board of School Directors. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates. Avonworth School District does not condone any form of initiation, known as hazing, as part of any school sponsored interscholastic sports team activity, and has adopted a policy prohibiting involvement of students, volunteers and employees in hazing activities. No student-athlete, coach, volunteer or district employee shall plan, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity.

### **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

All equipment and supplies purchased by the Avonworth School District is the property of the district and coaches are accountable for the equipment used in their sport. (Any equipment purchased by Avonworth Booster Clubs becomes property of the school district). Players are to be instructed in the proper care and maintenance of their equipment at the time of issue. The head coaches and their assistant(s) must have the knowledge of properly fitting equipment. Periodic inspection should be made of equipment to identify items that are unsafe, worn out, or defective. Equipment identified as unsafe or defective should be deactivated immediately.

Athletic department-issued equipment is to be used only for practice or contests that are part of the regularly scheduled season activities. The only exception would be for the wearing of game jerseys on a game day, during a spirit day, or at a pep assembly.

**NO PART OF A UNIFORM IS TO BE WORN DURING PARTICIPATION IN A PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS or WORN BY FAMILY OR FRIENDS AT EVENTS.**

Accurate inventories must be maintained as well as records indicating to whom the equipment has been issued. Athletes are to be held accountable for the equipment issued to them. No student is permitted to take part in another sport's season until all equipment obligations have been fulfilled.

For liability reasons, athletic department equipment will not be loaned to outside groups or organizations.

### **PROCEDURES FOR EXCUSE FROM CLASS AND SCHOOL**

Coaches will be responsible for informing the Athletic Secretary of early dismissal times for game days. Times should be communicated the day before the contest. They also need to note any changes to their original roster for dismissal to that particular event. Dismissal times for athletic events should be established to keep student-athletes in class as long as possible yet allow for safe travel to and adequate time for preparation at the event site. Look for natural breaks in school day periods for dismissals. Students should contact teachers in advance of their absences to obtain assignments for the class periods they will be missing.

### **TRANSPORTATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

Requests for transportation are to be submitted to the Athletic Secretary. The athletic office will authorize and send the necessary forms to be processed by the transportation department.

Coaches are responsible for the accountability of all persons traveling with the team. Travel rosters are to be prepared and attendance taken prior to departure to and from the scheduled destination. Attendance must be retaken if the trip is interrupted for rest stops or lunch or dinner breaks.

Prior to any bus leaving from Avonworth on an interscholastic athletic trip, the coach must possess an exact list of the names of all sport team students and coaches who are traveling in the group for that trip. At least one contracted coach MUST ride the bus.

Respect for vehicles and equipment is expected at all times. Sports equipment and travel gear is to be loaded so the vehicles are not damaged in any way. Student-athletes are to be properly seated at all times, and must not in any way distract the driver. All team members are to be instructed not to wear spikes or cleats on the bus. Food and drink on the bus is to be handled so there are no spills or debris remaining when the trip has concluded. Plastic garbage bags are to be taken on all trips, and the bus is to be inspected following the return home to insure cleanliness.

Athletic sites within the Avonworth school district that are deemed "HOME" competition/practice venues will be viewed as such for purposes of transportation. The following protocols will be in effect:

- When an event is scheduled during or immediately after school hours, coaches should supervise travel to the event via scheduled Avonworth transportation or walking. Only in special circumstances if the event is scheduled to occur at a time separated

from typical school hours, student-athletes may be asked to provide their own transportation to the site without the supervision of the coaching staff.

- Travel away from the event will be at the discretion of the coach. Student-athletes may travel back to the school campus via school-provided means or may travel via their own means without supervision but are not to transport any other students besides themselves.
- Travel to team activities, i.e.: team building, bonding etc., will follow the same protocols.

All student-athletes must travel to and from competition via the transportation provided by the School District. No student-athlete may drive, or travel with another person, to or from an away athletic event. Exceptions to this procedure would be extended for a student-athlete, when circumstances warrant, with advance notice, and transportation would be provided by the parent or guardian only. Student-athletes who miss the bus and arrive later at a contest are not permitted to participate unless they had received prior approval from the coach and athletic director.

Student athletes may travel home after events with their parents provided they have the coach's permission granted via note 24 hours prior to the contest.

Coaches are cautioned that transporting student-athletes in any vehicle (personal or another's) other than one provided by the Avonworth School District during the course of an official team activity is prohibited except in an emergency situation.

### **ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES TO INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC EVENTS**

It is the objective of the Avonworth School District to provide safe, secure and reliable modes of transportation for all interscholastic athletics teams in a fiscally-responsible manner.

The mode of transportation for all regular-season and post-season away contests will be assigned according to consistent standards as follows:

1. All middle school, ninth grade and junior varsity teams will travel via yellow school bus to all away contests. Exception would be when the junior varsity team travels with the varsity team, Rule #2 below would then apply

2. Charter buses may be used for PIAA State Championship contests or District One playoff contests with approval from the Athletic Director and the Director of Fiscal Management.

Note: Contributions from booster clubs, alumni or corporate sponsors earmarked to upgrade an assigned yellow bus to a coach bus will only be accepted for postseason competition in order to stay compliant with Title IX requirements.

### **MEALS AND LODGING**

Meal expenditures are only available for post-season competition. In-season meal expenditures are not available. Coaches may opt to seek support from their booster clubs relative to in-season meals or snacks. There are a few circumstances where in-season overnight trips may be extended to a team. This decision will be determined by the Superintendent, Principal and the Athletic Director.

### **POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT EXPENSES AND TRAVEL**

P.I.A.A. Regional and State playoff expenses for meals and lodging (if necessary) will be budgeted by the Athletic Director. Up to three regularly scheduled meals per day will be provided by the school district during post season competition. Coaches should be mindful of reasonable per diem. Any snacks or drinks for team members other than at these times are the responsibility of the team members or the booster club. Coaches must follow Avonworth School District business protocol in filling out the correct form for reimbursement. Arrangements for lodging and transportation will also be made by the coach through the athletic office.

The TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHER AND REQUEST FOR PAYMENT FORM (available in the athletic office) must be completed and submitted to the athletic director within one week after the trip's conclusion. It is the responsibility of the coach to determine how student-athletes are to be fed. Advance arrangements at a specific restaurant can be made through the athletic office. Itemized receipts are required for all district money used by the coaching staff for meals.

### **OVERNIGHT TRIPS (Limited to Tournaments and Post-Season)**

In some circumstances (Tournaments and State championship competition), overnight travel to sporting events may be warranted. In that case, all school district/athletics department/team policies, procedures, rules and regulations are in effect. In addition, each student-



athlete has the responsibility for making the trip a positive and enjoyable experience for all. Violations of these standards will result in disciplinary action according to the appropriate Student Handbook and Team Rules and Regulations.

Instances of rules infractions or other problems while on a trip must be reported to the Athletic Director, Principal, Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent immediately. Begin with the Athletic Director and if needed, work up the chain of command until you make direct contact; a message left on an answering machine or voice mail does not constitute direct contact.

Motel/hotel stays are to be pre-arranged so families will know the location in case of emergency or in the event they wish to stay at the same facility. Arrangements will be made by the coach and approved by the Athletic Director, and a voucher and payment request form prepared to allow a check to be drawn for payment upon check-out.

When registering, introduce yourself to the management and ask them to report to the coaching staff any problems that occur with the student-athletes. Make all individuals in the group understand what's expected of them and that they abide by those rules. Check all rooms prior to occupancy for damage, and just prior to check-out to be sure rooms are left in acceptable condition. Make one final check with management to see if there were any problems with your student-athletes. Express your appreciation to the management for their cooperation.

Direct supervision is extremely important when students are on overnight activities. Coaches must be visible and accessible to the student-athletes at all times. Careful screening of roommates should be completed prior to the trip. Information--including the address and phone contact-- must be shared with parents/guardians prior to the start of the trip. Curfew is required.

### **COACHES' RESPONSIBILITY (In Determining Daily Attendance Eligibility)**

The Avonworth attendance rule is an important part of the student-athlete's life as well as a responsibility of the teaching, administrative and coaching staff.

- Student-athletes must be made aware of the rules. Coaches need to reinforce by communicating the rules periodically.
- Coaches with access to the District's attendance program should check their sport teams' daily attendance listing. An Athletic Department secretary will email all head coaches a list every day, and it is the coaches' responsibility to review the list and communicate with their students
- Coaches should contact each student-athlete listed on the attendance list AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to examine the reason for their being listed. Do not wait until the bus is loading or near 2:30 PM; those are often hectic times in the school and supporting information from staff is difficult or impossible to gather.

- If the coach resolves a discrepancy to their satisfaction, the student-athlete participates. If the coach is unsure of the validity of either the listing or the student's excuse, they should contact the Athletic Office for assistance. Err in the favor of the student. Bus departures and 2:30 pm are also hectic times in the athletic office – do not wait to deal with the matter until that time. The Department secretaries are not responsible for making decisions about a student's eligibility. They can provide information only to help a coach make the decision.
- If an error is committed by a coach or the Athletic Director in allowing participation, the student will receive the consequence for that attendance irregularity for the next similar event (practice or competition).
- The effective operation of this system is predicated on having accurate information from teachers available through technology that performs consistently. Sometimes those goals are not achieved. Coaches should be prepared to use common sense and patience when enforcing the rule.

## **LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect interscholastic athletics. All and any precautions should be taken in the event of serious weather conditions. Consult with the on-duty athletic trainer if any questions arise as they will have access to lightning detection devices. ALWAYS ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION when dealing with lightning.

## **LOCKER ROOM SUPERVISION**

Student-athletes **MUST** be supervised at all times. This includes locker room facilities and lobby areas where student-athletes wait for the late bus as well as practice and competition areas.

All coaches are responsible for supervision. Coaches should make themselves visible in all areas as much as possible. Coaches should be the first to arrive and the last to leave the facility before or after a practice or competition.

## **MANDATED REPORTING**

As employees of the school district, coaches are considered mandated reporters relative to child abuse. A report must be made when there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, it is not necessary for the reporter to know for certain that a child was abused. The mandated reporter is protected from civil and criminal liability when they make a report in good faith. It is up to *Children and Youth Services* to investigate and determine whether the child was abused and the law requires that the name of a

mandated reporter be kept confidential and *Children and Youth Services* takes that requirement very seriously.

Regarding the community, it is important that they know that any person can make a report of child abuse. A voluntary reporter is called a permissive reporter. All they need is to have a reasonable cause to suspect child abuse. Child Line 1-800-932-0313

## **MEDIA RESPONSIBILITIES**

The local media receives copies of all athletic schedules. It is the responsibility of the coach or their designee to ensure all scores are reported to the various media sources following the activity. A list of media and their numbers will be distributed prior to the start of the season. Coaches are encouraged to do everything within reason to communicate with the radio and press. Remember, they are helping us to promote our programs and our student-athletes. Information given to the news media should be reported in a fair, but positive manner. Report any conflicts with the media to the athletic office. Score reports can also be sent directly to the media through the athletics website (VNN).

When traveling a considerable distance the home team may not report the score to our local newspapers. Please call our newspapers when returning from lengthy road games.

## **MEETINGS-LEAGUE AND RULES INTERPRETATION** **(P.I.A.A.)**

The Head Coach of the coaching staff of each member senior high school must attend the PIAA mandatory rules interpretation meeting each year for their sport. The principal of a member senior high school may appoint a representative of the coaching staff to attend the mandatory rules interpretation meeting if the head coach of the coaching staff in the sport has not been designated by the school district, and, therefore, the head coach of the coaching staff is not able to attend the annual mandatory rules interpretation meeting.

A member school that fails to have the head coach of its coaching staff, or an appointed representative of the head coach of the coaching staff, attend a minimum of one PIAA mandatory rules interpretation meeting each year for each boys' sport and for each girls' sport offered by the school, and in which a PIAA mandatory rules interpretation meeting is offered, shall pay a fine of \$100.00 for non-attendance. Payment of said fine shall be made to PIAA within 30 days of notification from PIAA that the head coach or representative of the head coach of the coaching staff failed to attend the annual mandatory rules interpretation meeting. If the fine is not paid within 30 days of notification, the member school shall automatically be on probation in all sports and shall automatically forfeit the right to compete in District and inter-district championship competition in all sports until such time as the fine is paid.

It is recommended that the head coach of the coaching staff of each member junior high/middle school attend the PIAA mandatory rules interpretation meeting each year for each boy's sport and for each girl's sport coached by that staff. When the head coach of the coaching staff for a particular sport does not attend the annual mandatory rules interpretation meeting, it is required that the head coach in that sport meet with the respective senior high school head coach or appointed representative in that sport for the purpose of obtaining all of the information that was presented at the annual mandatory rules interpretation meeting.

Attendance at an annual mandatory rules interpretation meeting is by PIAA-member school not by school district. **Contact information for specific meetings is available on the PIAA website: [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org).**

Head Coaches are also responsible to attend mandatory pre and post season league meetings. These meetings are scheduled by league liaison/chairpersons assigned to each sport sponsored by the league.

## **MULTIPLE SPORT PARTICIPATION vs. SPORT SPECIALIZATION**

Avonworth School District is committed to the development of well-rounded individuals both mentally and physically. Students at Avonworth are encouraged to broaden their academic avenues by participating in a variety of sports and activities. Students are encouraged to participate on as many different sports teams as they can during their careers. Sport specialization (playing only one sport) is NOT a supported philosophy by the athletic administration or the school district. ***No coach should ever try to influence a student-athlete to participate in only one sport.***

Additionally, for a student to participate on more than one team is permissible by School Board Policy 122.3. Students interested in participating in more than one sport during a given season must work closely with each coach, the Athletic Director, and their families to ensure reasonable accommodations can be made to support simultaneous participation.

## **MUSIC TAPES/CD's FOR PRE-GAME WARM-UPS**

If a team wishes to play "warm-up" music in the venue during their pre-game routine, it must secure authorization prior to the event from the Athletic Director. Student-athletes from a team (or the team's booster club) must share their playlists (through Apple Music, Spotify, etc.) to the Principal or Athletic Director prior for approval. Lyrics that contain sexually suggestive messages, references to drugs and alcohol, profanity or racist, sexist, or gender abusive language will not be authorized.

## **OFF-CAMPUS TRAINING**

There may be some time when a coach desires an athletic team to train off campus. Such training must be limited to avoid imposing the district's athletic program on others. The most common type of off-campus training would involve running for purposes of warm-up or conditioning. These sessions **are to be closely supervised**, and the coach must be aware of the location of the student-athletes at all times.

## **OFF SEASON OPEN GYM/FIELD/COURT/TRACK WORK-OUTS**

Coaches may work with Avonworth-enrolled student-athletes in open, off-season, non-mandatory work-outs. Participation in these work-outs are open-to-all and must always be made available to all potential student-athletes through communications directed to the general student body. Sport Interest Forms via Google Forms as well as in school announcements (with dates, times and locations) will be used to communicate this information each season.

When open practices are scheduled for early morning, pre-school hours, coaches should have a plan in place to communicate with student-athletes when open-practice is cancelled due to school closure or a delayed start. General announcements either the night before or prior to the scheduled practice time via public announcement (Alma, Athletics Website, etc. ) or via the District website are preferred so as to reach all potential student-athletes.

## **PEP RALLIES**

Pep Rallies are coordinated by the Principal in conjunction with the Athletic Department. The purpose of Pep Rallies is to enable the school's student body to participate in and to observe actions, which are in support of all school activities, and to foster pride in one's school.

It is during this time that the real spirit and pride of the school is shown. It is expected that students behave in a mature and appropriate manner. When Pep Rallies are held during the school day, students are expected to enter the gymnasium or stadium quickly and quietly as directed. Students will be assigned specific areas for all Pep

Rallies. If Pep Rallies are held during the evening, student-athletes and coaches should make every effort to attend.

All coaches are encouraged to attend and participate in all Pep Rallies that are held during the school day.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY (SECURITY OF)**

While the school district is not responsible for the loss of personal property of students, the best defense against theft is educating your student-athletes about the possibility and offering suggestions for properly securing their personal possessions.

1. Encourage student-athletes **not** to carry large sums of money or wear expensive jewelry to practice or contests.
2. Encourage student-athletes to lock their possessions in approved lockers at all times.

In conjunction with the philosophy of "safe schools", it is important that outside doors remain closed and secure at all times. Please aid in this effort to keep our schools safe.

**IMPORTANT:** Coaches should not give building keys to student-athletes to use for any reason.

## **PLAYING TIME**

The interscholastic athletics philosophy of the Avonworth School District identifies the standards for participation and playing time at each level of sport activity.

### **Middle School/Junior High**

At the middle school/junior high level, athlete participation and development of skills in a sport are valued above the winning of contests.

### **Junior Varsity and Freshman**

At the Junior Varsity level, instruction and the development of individual skills for all athletes continues to be emphasized. However, team success in inter-school competition is also valued.

### **Varsity**

At the varsity level, coaches have the dual responsibility of fostering individual skill development and achieving team success. To achieve his end, the most effective student-athletes, regardless of grade level, will be given the opportunity to further develop their athletic abilities and to work together to develop a strong desire to attain the highest possible levels of team success.

It is the responsibility of each sports team's coaches to make determinations regarding playing time based upon their observation and evaluation of athletes during try-outs, practices and competitions in accord with the principles of the Avonworth philosophy of interscholastic athletics. Coaches will communicate with parents and students about their own approaches to playing time and what is acceptable communication regarding playing time concerns.

### **POSTPONING EVENTS**

If the playing of a home event is in question due to weather conditions or any other factor not conducive to safe and fair conditions, the Athletic Director will, when possible, confer with the Head Coach in order to make the decision whether or not to postpone the event.

### **"PLAYING UP"**

There may be a circumstance in which the skill level of a student enrolled at a particular grade level of a sport and the nature of the team/sport/competition warrant the student participating on a team that is offered for students of a higher grade. When an initiative to do so is made, P.I.A.A. by-laws must be followed and coaches, parents, the student and administrators must be in agreement that this move is in the best interest of the student.

### **POST SEASON DUTIES**

#### **SEASON SUMMARY**

The Season Summary form is sent by the Superintendent's Office and is to be completed by the head coach within fifteen school days of the final contest of the season. It is to be returned to the athletic office and will be included as part of the sport file for that year or may be given to the athletic director or secretary during the coaches' end-of-season meeting. Post Season stipend will be calculated at this time.

#### **HEAD COACH EVALUATIONS**

All head coaches will meet with the Athletic Director after their season for an evaluation.

Coaches must complete the self-evaluation form prior to meeting with the Athletic Director. Coaches will receive feedback and comments from the Athletic Director, as well as discuss goals for programmatic growth. Coaches with passing evaluations will be recommended for re-hire to the School Board of Directors.

Coaching recommendations will be presented to the Board of School Directors according to the following schedule:

- Fall sports coaching recommendations are due by the January Board meeting
- Winter sports coaching recommendations due by the May Board meeting
- Spring sports coaching recommendations due by the July Board meeting

The Head Coach will evaluate the Assistant Coaches and shall recommend to the Athletic Director the assistant coaches they wish to have as part of their staff for the upcoming season. The Athletic Director will present these recommendations to the administration for board approval the month before their season begins.

### **STUDENT-ATHLETE FEEDBACK SURVEY**

Coaches are strongly encouraged to solicit feedback from their student-athletes. Feedback measures should consist of opportunities for team members to comment on topics such as the practice structure, type and amount of feedback received from coaches, amount of team effort and improvement, coach expectations, coach communication style, and coach behaviors. Feedback is not meant to be critical of coaches; rather the purpose is to make coaches aware of behaviors their team finds helpful and those, which may hinder the success of the team. The reason for obtaining feedback is so coaches can be more effective at their jobs. As individuals teaching young people how to be successful, coaches should recognize that the desire to improve is a key aspect of success. If coaches do receive negative feedback, data can be analyzed by demographic information (ex. playing time) to see if negative responses came mostly from student-athletes with common characteristics, and those results can be noted. In doing so, the identities of the student-athletes will still remain anonymous.

### **EQUIPMENT CARE AND INVENTORY**

Equipment purchased with school district funds is the property of the school district and coaches are expected to assume the responsibility for the management of that equipment. Accurate records must be maintained for equipment on hand, equipment issued, and equipment not returned.



Student-athletes must be informed at the pre-season meeting that equipment issued to them is their responsibility and they will be held accountable for its safe return. Every effort must be made to have all equipment returned at the end of the season. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to reimburse the athletic department for any equipment lost or stolen during the season. Coaches are to notify the student-athlete and then the parent that equipment is still outstanding. If equipment has not been returned within one week following the notices, a bill for the equipment will be sent home.

No student is permitted to take part in another sports season until all equipment obligations have been fulfilled.

### **AWARDS AND AWARDS BANQUETS**

There are a number of categories of awards with which the coach is to be familiar. These would include the *varsity*, *junior varsity* and *junior high/middle school* letter awards, season awards night and an end of year awards assembly.

Letter award criteria are determined by the coaching staff of the individual sport. These criteria may include, but are not limited to, playing time, points scored, dedication, co-operation, loyalty, leadership, a sense of fair play, and years of service. Coaches are to inform their student-athletes prior to the start of the season of the criteria so there will be no misunderstanding of what is necessary to earn a letter.

Students dismissed from the team for disciplinary reasons or that elect to leave the squad on their own prior to the completion of the season forfeit their eligibility for awards.

The athletic office will prepare the letters and certificates for presentation from the list prepared by the coach. This list is to be in the athletic office at least one week prior to the date they are needed.

### **AWARDS - LETTERS**

At the close of each sport season, the coach will submit to the Athletic Office the list of players to receive awards for approval. Lettering criteria needs to be on file with the Athletic Director each season.

The Varsity awardees will initially receive a certificate and an 8" chenille "A" along with their particular gold sport pin. Each subsequent Varsity award will be the parchment certificate or a plaque and a gold service bar pin. To earn a letter a player must have actively participated in/or dressed in practices and contests. Attendance at practices and contests is a necessity.

If an athlete is disciplined for a conduct, tobacco or substance abuse violation, they are not eligible for an athletic award in that sport or any other athletic awards in the school

year in which the incident occurred.

### **AWARDS - SERVICE**

Service Awards may be awarded to seniors in any sport, for sincerity and loyalty, for three year's service if full varsity letter requirements have not been fulfilled. Such awards shall be recommended by the coach, and meet with the approval of the Principal and the Athletic Director.

A manager may be awarded a varsity letter for service of at least one full sport season upon recommendation of the coach of that particular sport. This varsity letter may be counted toward the "special" award. Varsity awards may also be given under special circumstances.

Coaches making a presentation at banquets given by booster clubs are to keep in mind the following guidelines when preparing their comments:

1. Express gratitude to those who helped with the season. Caution should be taken not to forget someone.
2. Keep comments about the season light and positive.
3. Make sure every player is introduced by name. Comments about individuals should be positive and reflect on their contribution to the program.
4. Keep most comments for seniors.
5. Discuss upcoming goals and plans for next season.
6. Do not talk about previous teams.
7. Do not use anecdotes that are not appropriate for a formal awards banquet.
8. Do not make negative comments about other schools.

## **PRE-SEASON PREPARATION**

### **ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

Each head coach will conduct a pre-season organizational meeting. The best time for this meeting is to take place within the two weeks prior to the first practice date for winter and spring sports. Coaches of fall sports are advised to conduct their meetings during the last two weeks of May in the prior school year. The meeting is to serve as a time to inform student-athletes of the school district's athletic philosophy, athletic department procedures and individual coaching rules that will govern them throughout the season. Additionally, coaches should schedule a meeting with parents once the season has begun to discuss with them the same items covered with the students (meeting can be concurrent). Coaches must discuss their criteria, objective and subjective, used to select the team. Overall procedures to be used in team selection are to be discussed at this time. Handouts will be prepared to inform students and parents of season expectations, rules against hazing, proper use of social media, practice schedules, training rules, school texting/email policy, awards criteria and other general information. Communication with student-athletes and parents is extremely important. As a supplement, we ask coaches to consider the following:

In addition to holding meetings, have information available on the team website (linked to the school district webpage) which covers these points in a clear, concise manner. Positive outcomes of this information would be:

1. Written confirmation of what is covered verbally in your orientation to candidates.
2. A source of information for candidates who may miss the meeting because they don't get information through announcements or have a conflict with the meeting time.
3. A reference for the Athletic Department staff to provide information to new or just questioning students and parents in order to direct them to a clear and definitive base of information.

Suggested information to be included:

- Your sport team
- Identification of and introduction to the coaching staff, as well as coaches' contact information
- Philosophy of the program
- Pre-season conditioning/preparation opportunities available to students

- Details about official practice (times/locations)
- A list of the criteria to be used in any selection process that will be employed

*Coaches may use the standard procedure to have your information posted on the Athletics website.*

### **DOCUMENT APPROVALS**

Any documents distributed to parents or student-athletes relative to participation information, team rules, season preparation information, or any other school team information must be submitted to the athletic director for approval prior to distribution. If coaches distribute non-approved documents, when questioned by parents the athletic administration will not be able to support what has been distributed. Please submit documents in a timely manner for approval before distribution.

### **PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS**

1. Students wishing to join an interscholastic athletics sport team for the first time in a school year must submit all required forms to Healthy Roster prior to tryouts (no exceptions) . In addition, parent and student signatures must be secured and an Authorized Medical Examiner (AME) must complete and sign Section 4 of the Comprehensive Initial Pre- Participation Physical Exam (CIPPE). Finally, the printed signed CIPPE must be submitted to the Athletic Training Office according to the schedules posted by the PIAA and the Avonworth Department of Athletics.
2. Any student who fulfills the requirements to participate in a PIAA interscholastic sport during a school year and seeks to participate in subsequent sport(s) in the same school year, must complete and submit to the Avonworth Athletic Training Office their PIAA Recertification by Parent/Guardian form (CIPPE, Section 5) according to the schedules posted by the PIAA and Avonworth Department of Athletics. If after review by Avonworth athletic training staff it is determined the student needs further medical evaluation, a "Re-evaluation and Recertification by Authorized Medical Examiner" form (Section 6, CIPPE) must be completed and u.
3. Finally, if the student-athlete is participating in wrestling, they must have established a minimum wrestling weight class utilizing the National Wrestling Coaches' Association (NWCA) Optimal Performance Calculator as the mechanism to calculate the minimum wrestling weight. The Avonworth certified assessor will perform all required testing and complete Section 7 of the CIPPE form.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Coaching is often considered to be both an art and a science. The idea that two

coaches who have totally different personalities and totally different approaches to the game can both be successful could demonstrate that coaching is an art form. Furthermore, the idea that trial and error is a commonly used form of teaching could demonstrate that coaching is a science.

Above all, coaching is a skill, which can be cultivated and developed over time. Coaches can develop their coaching skills in a variety of ways. The easiest way is to talk with, listen to, and observe other successful coaches. To be a successful teacher of the sport, you must also be a successful student of the sport. The Athletic Director will assign a coaching mentor to all new head coaches. Mentors will operate on a volunteer basis.

The Avonworth School District encourages coaches to improve their professional skills by encouraging them to attend coaching clinics. Limited reimbursement for coaches to attend clinics and conferences may be budgeted each year. The amount usually does not cover all the expenses incurred at a clinic or conference. The remainder of the expense is the coach's responsibility.

As coordinator of the program grades 7 thru 12, the Head Varsity Coach should share information obtained from clinics and discussions with other members of the coaching staff. Because the coordinator supervises the other coaches in the program, the coordinator has the obligation to help those coaches to grow and develop their skills.

Coaches are encouraged to join professional coaching organizations such as the National Federation Interscholastic Coaches Association (NFICA) and the Pennsylvania Coaches Association (PCA). Application forms are available on-line. In addition, coaching education courses are available through the American Sport Education Program (ASEP).

### **Attendance at Clinics and Conferences Procedure**

Coaches desiring to attend clinics or conferences and requesting school district reimbursement for any part of the expenses **must be pre-approved by the athletic director**. Requests for permission to attend clinics must be in the athletic office by the last Friday of the month prior to the month the clinic is to be held. This will allow time for presentation to the school board.

If the coach is an Avonworth School District teacher, it is necessary to be absent from school to attend the clinic, the requesting coach (es) must also secure a substitute through the standard procedure.

## **SAFETY IN YOUTH SPORTS ACT AND SCA LAW**

The Governor of Pennsylvania signed into law two ACTS concerning the well being of student-athletes, Senate Bill No. 200 and House Bill 1610. Both of these laws list specific requirements for anyone involved in interscholastic sports, club sports and intramural activities. A coach, intramural activity coordinator, supervisor or volunteer shall not coach an athletic activity until the coach completes the training course and provides proof to the Avonworth School District athletic department on a yearly basis.

### **SAFETY IN YOUTH SPORTS ACT, Senate Bill No. 200**

Establishes standards for managing concussions and traumatic brain injuries to student-athletes. Athletic activity is defined as interscholastic athletics, an athletic contest or competition, other than interscholastic athletics, that is sponsored by or associated with a school entity (intramurals), including cheerleading, club-sponsored sports activities and sports activities sponsored by school-affiliated organizations.

Requirements: A coach shall complete the concussion management certification-training course as directed by the Athletic Office or any course approved by the PA Department of Health. **A coach, intramural activity coordinator or supervisor shall not coach an athletic activity until the coach completes the training course and provides proof to the Avonworth School District athletic training department annually.**

### **SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST LAW FOR YOUTH ATHLETES, House Bill 1610**

Like the concussion law, the newly approved measure requires that any student-athlete who exhibits symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest during an athletic activity be removed from play immediately. Furthermore, a student-athlete must be held out of all athletic activities if they exhibit any signs of cardiac arrest before or after an event.

Under the new law, coaches must complete an annual training course about sudden cardiac arrest, and cannot coach an athletic activity until they complete the training. A coach, intramural activity coordinator, supervisor shall not coach an athletic activity until the coach completes the training course and provides proof to the Avonworth School District athletic department.

## **SCHEDULES**

The Athletic Director schedules all interscholastic athletic contests in accordance with Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) rules and regulations.

As a member of various leagues and conferences, Avonworth School District's athletic program is obligated to schedule all conference/league teams. With authorization from

the Athletic Director, coaches are permitted to make contacts to schedule games and scrimmages, but all final arrangements and agreements for those games and scrimmages are the responsibility of the Athletic Director.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/DELAYED STARTS/EARLY DISMISSALS/LATE BUS CANCELLATIONS**

In the event school has a delayed start, is cancelled or is dismissed early due to inclement weather, all contests, practices and "open" activities are to be cancelled. When late buses are cancelled because of concerns about weather conditions, all practices are to be cancelled.

Because of a sometimes-rapid change in weather conditions and exceptional circumstances relating to a team, the above-stated procedure may be amended through selective administrative action.

## **SCRIMMAGES**

Coaches must go through the Athletic Director in order to schedule scrimmages in the preseason. The number of scrimmages is limited by the P.I.A.A. and may be further limited by the athletic department depending on teams available and distance of trips. The P.I.A.A. definition of a scrimmage must be strictly adhered to. Extra scrimmages are allowed for teams who qualify for district and state playoffs. These scrimmages must be scheduled through the Athletic Office.

## **SCOUTING**

Scouting opponents can be important in preparing student-athletes for upcoming contests. Coaches are expected to share films using Hudl as determined by their conference. Coaches are encouraged to seek out film from other coaches for the purposes of conducting film sessions with their teams.

## **SEASON AND OUT-OF-SEASON P.I.A.A. RULES AND REGULATIONS - Adherence and Enforcement**

The initial responsibility for adherence to and enforcement of the P.I.A.A. by-laws by the member "Avonworth" and their students and other personnel rests with the Principal of each school. However, all Athletic Department employees are bound to conduct themselves in accordance with the by-laws and earnestly advocate them before others.

The P.I.A.A. Handbook, including all of the by-laws, is available at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org) or in

text form in the athletic office. All coaches are encouraged to become familiar with matters related to their duties.

□ **P.I.A.A. ARTICLE XVI – SEASON AND OUT-OF-SEASON RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**A. Out-of-Season Activities.**

Any sports activity that occurs outside the defined-season for a sport is outside the jurisdiction of PIAA, except as set forth in this Section; in ARTICLE II, AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS; and in ARTICLE IX, REPRESENTATION, Section 2, All-Star Contests.

**B. Outside of the defined-season for sports:**

- (a) member schools may not sponsor Teams; member schools and coaches and/or students of member schools may be involved with sports activities such as training programs, recreational activities, Open Gyms, clinics, and camps provided that any participation by coaches and/or students is as private citizens and is voluntary as described below;
- (b) Coaches and/or students acting as private citizens, and on a voluntary basis, may participate on Teams that are not affiliated with their school or other member schools during the out-of-season period. The coach or other personnel representing the school shall not require a student to participate in a sport or training programs for a sport outside of the PIAA-defined sport's season. The participation of students in any sports activity that occurs outside of its defined season must be voluntary.
- (c) The school's name, nickname, interscholastic athletic uniform, interscholastic athletic equipment, and interscholastic athletic health/first-aid supplies may not be used by community organizations and groups. The school's name, nickname and interscholastic athletic uniforms may not be used by students; however, the Principal, with the exception of football equipment, may permit students to use the school's interscholastic athletic equipment and the school's interscholastic athletic health/first-aid supplies.

## **SECURITY SERVICES**

Currently, the athletic department uses in-house security and limited athletic event security services at all high profile athletic events. Please cooperate with security personnel at all times. Any questions regarding security services may be directed to the Athletic Director.



## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Avonworth School District will not tolerate any behavior by administrators, faculty, staff or students which constitutes sexual harassment of a student or employee. In addition, it is the responsibility of all administrators and supervisory personnel, faculty, staff, and students to report any conduct that is perceived to be sexual harassment. This policy is in compliance with provisions of Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting sex discrimination.

Sexual harassment lowers morale and is damaging to the work environment; it is also illegal. This policy is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Regulations published as 29 CFR Sec. 1604, and guidelines adopted by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media has seen an explosion in recent years. With the use of Facebook, Twitter, text messaging, etc. more people are using these methods for "automatic" or "instant" communication.

Students and adults have taken communication to the levels that could not have been imagined over a quarter of a century ago. Letters, numbers and symbols have taken on different meanings in communication. Not only are messages and photos sent instantly, they can express or evoke emotions – anger, fear, sadness and happiness – via an array of seemingly random letters/numbers posing as words or sentences. The consequences of these messages and images can be potentially dangerous.

The perceived anonymity of posting messages and images to chat rooms, blogs or text messaging can create a false sense of security to the user, prompting a student to think "it's no big deal". This assumption is clearly wrong and potentially harmful. A quick scan of the daily news re-affirms the dangers of cyber-bullying, sexual predators, and identity thefts, as well as the development of inappropriate relationships between adults and minors.

Interscholastic coaches have a moral and legal responsibility to maintain an appropriate professional adult-to-minor relationship with their students. Interscholastic coaches may be held liable for inappropriate activity with minors using electronic communication devices.

Coaches should limit their social media communication with student-athletes for information purposes only. Commenting on Facebook and Twitter or texting personal or intimate information to student-athletes is both inappropriate and unnecessary. Coaches should only use social media avenues to disseminate team information that is relative to the operation and management of the team and is appropriate.

Additionally, coaches should refer to Board Policy 816- District Social Media for guidelines relative to Social Media and professional boundaries. Permission forms must be completed in order to use text messaging with your student- athletes.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Throughout the course of the season, certain non-athletic events will occur that require some thought and planning. Events such as Homecoming and Senior Recognition Nights, to name a few, add something special to the season but are generally thought of as “added attractions”. For these events to be successful and enjoyable the coach must work in conjunction with other faculty members, cheerleading advisors, parents, booster groups, custodians and administration. In addition, the normal game routine may be disrupted by extending half time, prolonging the intermission between games or delaying the start of a game or meet. Although coaches are encouraged to be well prepared for contests and work within an established time schedule, your flexibility and cooperation is requested and appreciated.

## **STORAGE/EQUIPMENT AREAS**

There are storage/equipment areas throughout the campus and buildings. These areas are to be used to store in-season equipment. All coaches must ensure that areas are secured before leaving the facility after each day of use. Area keys may be obtained through the Athletic Office. No keys may be reproduced. Keys must be checked by the Athletic Director at the end of each season, and returned to the Athletic Director when a coach is no longer coaching in the district.

## **STUDENT MANAGERS**

The selection and oversight of a student manager or managers is the responsibility of the coaching staff. The individual or individuals should be good students, hard workers, responsible and dependable. With the exception of the physical requirement, managers will be expected to adhere to all of the same rules and regulations governing student-athletes. Care should be taken when selecting student managers so that they understand their role. Students who want to “hang out” with the team may become an added responsibility to the coaching staff that could detract attention from their coaching duties. Be sure to select only students who understand their role and responsibility on the team. Once the selection has been made, the names of the student managers are to be included as part of the team roster.

Typical managerial duties include keeping score, collecting balls, distributing water, logging stats, organizing equipment, etc.

Student managers are in no way to participate in practice, scrimmage or game activities in any manner, which would usually describe the role of a "player."

## **TEAM WEBSITES**

Coaches are required to promote their teams on the Avonworth Athletics website site. Guidelines for creating and maintaining a site are available through the Athletic Director and VNN.

## **TITLE IX - FEMALE PARTICIPANTS**

Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act, passed in 1972, requires equity between men and women in three areas: equal opportunity to participate in sports in relation to the percentage of men and women in the student body; equal access to scholarship money; and facilities and support services.

The Avonworth School District is committed to providing equal opportunities for all persons without regard to sex, race, creed, religion, ethnic background or handicap in its educational programs, policies and employment practices. Inquiries should be directed to the Director of Student Services.

## **TRAINING RULES**

Student-athletes perform best when they follow safe training rules. These rules include prohibitions in the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. The Avonworth School District has board-approved policies regarding the use of these substances by all students on Avonworth property and at Avonworth-sponsored activities on any site with the objective of providing a drug and tobacco free environment. Furthermore, the athletic department prohibits the use of all banned substances by any athlete for the length of their team's sport season at any time, either on or off a school campus. Violations by District student-athletes of these policies or rules will be covered according to the District policy, and department procedure. Policies and regulations are found in the student handbook.

### Special Notes

- An athlete who has an out of season infraction may begin practice for the next season only with the approval of the Assistant Principal.

- If an athlete is dismissed from a team, they may not join another team, participate in intramurals or weight training during that season.
- If an athlete is disciplined for a conduct, tobacco or substance abuse violation, they are not eligible for an athletic award or letter in that sport or any outstanding athletic awards in the school year in which the incident occurred.
- Athletes may also be subject to their coach's rules which may result in dismissal from the team. Such a rule will be supported by the Athletic Office and is not subject to appeal.
- Any student who voluntarily admits chemical use/abuse and/or dependency to any Avonworth School District staff member, without being prompted, will temporarily not participate in any school sponsored club, activity, or athletic team until professional assessment of the chemical dependency is complete. If the student is an athlete, they will be reinstated as an athletic participant when evaluation and their program indicate they can safely and appropriately participate.

## **VOLUNTEER COACHES**

Properly managed, the use of volunteer coaches can be a valuable asset to an athletic program. Selection of volunteers must be a carefully thought-out process. Care must be given to select a person or persons who are personable, knowledgeable, interested in the welfare of the student-athletes and the team and willing to operate under the strict guidance of the coaching staff. Volunteers may be permitted to have input in such areas as team strategy, team selection and practice organization. Persons involved as volunteers may assist the coaching staff in the decision-making process, but the final responsibility in all decisions rests with the head coach.

Volunteers are to be supervised at all times. All volunteers are required to apply for all district required clearances, certificates (concussion, SCA), as well as a completed coaching application including their resume and a letter of interest sent to the Athletic Director. Once these clearances are secured the original approval forms received from the State must be presented to the athletic office prior to contact with team members.

It is normally not appropriate to select an individual as a volunteer if their child is a candidate for the team. Consideration may be given to a parent with specialized skills or one who has been a longtime volunteer in a specific program. All volunteers' participation will be under constant evaluation.

## **Section II. ATHLETIC TRAINING**

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the goal and intent of the Athletic Training Staff to give quality care to all of the student-athletes of Avonworth High School. The staff will adhere to the ethics of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Inc. and Pennsylvania's Athletic Trainers' Practice Act.

### **SPORTS MEDICINE STAFF**

Team Physician: (Dr. Marco Alcala) – The Team Physician oversees and approves a standard of care, as written in a Medical Standing Orders, for the care and rehabilitation of the student-athletes.

Head Athletic Trainer: (Brandon Rea, LAT ) – The Head Athletic Trainer shall direct and oversee the daily operations of the Athletic Training room including practice and game coverage of varsity, junior varsity and freshman sport teams. They will oversee prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of injuries to the student-athletes.

Student Athletic Trainers: Avonworth High School will continue being an active participant in the clinical education of student athletic trainers from Duquesne University and/ or neighboring colleges and universities. All students are maintained and carry out the care of student-athletes as per state law and the contractual agreements between Allegheny Health Network and the local school.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM**

It is imperative that all rehabilitation and treatments be completed prior to practices beginning in order for student-athletes to properly prepare themselves and compete. The Athletic Training room (ATR) will also be open during school hours for rehabilitation and treatment of those student-athletes with campus privileges or open spots in their schedules. Treatments during these times should be scheduled with the athletic training staff prior to the occurrence.

## **PRACTICE COVERAGE**

Every effort will be made to have a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) on-site for all practices to be available for the student-athletes. It must be understood that all home games will get on-field coverage while practices may be going on.

## **GAME COVERAGE**

As required by PIAA governing rules an ATC will attend all varsity football games home and away. An ATC will also cover all home junior-varsity and freshman football games. Every effort will be made to cover all home events with a representative of the athletic training staff with an ATC being onsite. It should be known that you must be able to contact the ATC at all times, if he is at a different field or location.

## **MEDICAL CERTIFICATION (for student-athletes)**

All student-athletes must receive medical certification to participate with a sports team per PIAA rules. The forms are located on the Athletics website. Medical certification is good for one year from the date of the physical unless (a) the student suffers an illness or injury which renders the student unable to participate in 25% or more of the Regular Season Contests in the immediate preceding sports season; and/or (b) suffers an illness or injury which resulted in absence from school for ten (10) or more days and/or requires surgery. In these cases a re-certification will be required. The Athletic Office will maintain a list of all student-athletes cleared to participate.

**Wrestling Weight Certification:** The PIAA has established a wrestling weight certification program that is required for all middle school and high school wrestlers. The Athletic Training Staff will oversee the certification process in accordance with PIAA regulations. For additional information please contact the Head Athletic Trainer or the Head Wrestling Coach.

## **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

Fire/EMS/Police	911
Brandon Rea (Head ATC)	412-304-7521
Andrea Patton (Athletic Director)	412-369-8738
Keera Dwulit (Principal)	412-366-6360 ext. *Emergency 1600*

Pam Robinson (Athletics Secretary)	412-366-6360 ext. 1601
Avonworth School District	412-366-6360
First Student	412-537-4777

### **METHICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS (MRSA)**

Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* or MRSA is a type of staph that is resistant to the antibiotic methicillin and its close cousins oxacillin, penicillin and amoxicillin.

Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most frequently among persons in hospitals and healthcare facilities (such as nursing homes and dialysis centers) who have weakened immune systems.

The main mode of spread of all forms of staph, including MRSA, is by the **hands** and skin-to-skin contact, crowded conditions, and poor hygiene. The sharing of towels, personal hygiene items like razors, athletic equipment, clothes, non-sterilized tattoo instruments, and illicit drug paraphernalia also promote the spread of *S.aureus* from one individual to another. Habits like body shaving are also thought to promote MRSA infection.

MRSA most often presents as skin or soft tissue infection such as a boil or abscess. Pimples, rashes, pus-filled boils, especially when warm, painful, red or swollen, can indicate a staph skin infection. Impetigo is one example of a skin infection that can be caused by staph, including MRSA. Patients frequently recall a "spider bite".

Staph infections also can cause more serious infections, such as blood stream infections or pneumonia, leading to symptoms of shortness of breath, fever, and chills.

Most MRSA infections are treated by administering good wound and skin care: incision and drainage of boils by a healthcare provider, keeping the area clean and dry, washing hands after caring for the area, carefully disposing of any bandages, and allowing the body to heal.

For more information about MRSA, refer to the district website or [www.health.state.pa.us](http://www.health.state.pa.us) or contact the district Athletic Trainer.

### **REPORTING OF INJURIES**

Injuries and Evaluations: All injuries that occur during an athletic practice or event should be reported to the Athletic Training staff in a timely fashion. Injuries that occur outside a school function or event should also be reported to the Athletic Training Staff. Especially for student-athletes that are currently in-season). The Athletic Training Staff shall complete an initial evaluation and decide on the appropriate handling of the injury.

## **TREATMENT OF ATHLETES**

Treatment of injuries to athletes will be implemented according to the following guidelines with the knowledge and consent of the Team Physician. It is understood that minor adjustments may be occasionally necessary for optimal results. An ATC must approve any adjustments. It is also understood that this guideline refers to the treatment of young (14-19 years of age) healthy individuals who are medically able to compete in high school athletics. At no time should a coach prescribe treatment of an athlete without consent of the Athletic Training Staff.

1. Ice – Used on most new muscular-skeletal trauma for the first 24 to 72 hours post-injury or until the active inflammatory process slows. Special care must be given with individuals with blonde or red hair, blue eyes and light skin complexion due to a potential for hypersensitivity to hypothermia.
2. Ice with compression and elevation – Used on all new musculoskeletal trauma for the first 24 to 72 hours or until edema formation has stopped.
3. Ice Massage – May be used in conjunction with cryokinetics when exercise does not constitute a threat to proper healing or when an amnestic condition is desired.
4. Cold Whirlpool – May be used in the post-acute stages, for inflammatory conditions or in conjunction with exercise when the exercise program does not constitute a threat to proper healing or when an anesthetic condition is desired. Water temperature will usually be between 55 and 60 degrees Fahrenheit.
5. Contrast Bath – May be used as a supportive modality or when a vascular pumping action is desired.
6. Warm Whirlpool/Heat (hydrocollator) Packs – May be used as a local form of superficial heat for sub-acute or chronic musculoskeletal injuries to the extremities. Water temperature normally will be between 100 and 110 degrees. Hydrocollator packs may be substituted if large body areas need to be treated and cannot be submerged to treat that specific area. Warm whirlpool usually becomes the treatment choice for one or more of the following reasons:
  - Uniformity of heat around an irregular body part.
  - Need to increase range of motion in joints being treated.
  - Need for active exercise while heat is applied.



Special care must be given with individuals with blonde or red hair, blue eyes and light skin complexion as well as when conditions are favorable for heat related illnesses.

7. Electrical Stimulation – May be used with sub-acute, acute or chronic injury management. May also be used in conjunction with exercise for muscle re-education.
8. Iontophoresis – May be used for treatment of specific orthopedic pathologies. This modality can only be used with written orders from a physician and under the direct supervision of the certified athletic trainer.
9. Massage – May be used for the following sub-acute or chronic situations:
  - Gentle effleurage to aid venous and lymphatic drainage.
  - Friction to tendonitis problems or adhesions secondary to surgery.
  - Effleurage and/or petrissage to aid in the relief of muscle spasm
10. Ultrasound – May be used on sub-acute or chronic localized soft tissue trauma. Usually most effective on dense tissues (ligaments or tendons) and areas where specific pain location (trigger point) may be determined. The use of the contact method or the submersion method is left up to the discretion of the certified athletic trainer. Treatment is limited to 2 weeks or 10 treatments. Treatment will not take place over epiphyseal areas of immature athletes, near the spine or genitalia. Intensity normally will not exceed 1.5 watts per square centimeter for five minutes.
11. Ultrasound with electrical stimulation – May be used where muscle spasm is associated with pathology of the tendon or musculotendinous junction.
12. Phonophoresis – May be used on sub-acute or chronic localized soft tissue trauma. Must be used with a prescription from a physician. Treatment will not take place over epiphyseal areas of immature athletes. Intensity normally will not exceed 1.5 watts per square centimeter for five minutes. This modality can only be used with written orders from a physician and under the direct supervision of the certified athletic trainer.
13. Therapeutic Exercise – Will be used in all injuries that affect any of the following:
  - Muscle damage
  - Joint stability
  - Joint strength
  - Muscle strength

- Joint range of motion
- Muscle flexibility
- Proprioception
- Joint mobilization

### **RETURN TO PLAY AFTER AN INJURY**

Any time an athlete is seen by a Physician, for anything other than a routine check-up, a note from that Physician should be brought to the Athletic Training Staff detailing the condition, any restrictions due to this condition and any required rehabilitation or treatment needed. This includes any trips to an Emergency Room. Athletes will be restricted from practice/play until such note is presented to the Athletic Training Staff. If an athlete has been restricted from practice/play by a Physician, a note from that Physician will be required to return-to-play. If the Athletic Training Staff has restricted an athlete from practice/play they may not return until cleared by the Athletic Training Staff.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM POLICIES**

- The athletic training room (ATR) will be open from the end of the school day until the end of practices/games unless otherwise posted or needed for sports coverage.
- ALL injuries should be reported to the Athletic Training Staff as soon as possible.
- Athletes will be treated on a first-come first-serve basis with the exception of teams that are traveling or teams with games.
- Athletes are responsible for getting their taping or treatments done in time for practices/games.
- Athletes who are restricted from practice/play are expected to report to the training room for treatments and/or rehabilitation after 3:00 p.m. unless otherwise directed by the Athletic Training Staff.
- No athlete is permitted to use the ATR, its modalities and/or equipment without the supervision of an ATC.
- Self-treatment is not permitted at any time. Athletes must be evaluated by the Sports Medicine Staff prior to any treatments or rehabilitation.
- Treatments and rehabilitation should be completed until released by the Athletic Training Staff.

- Please be respectful of others in the ATR. Vulgar and offensive language will not be tolerated. Failure to comply will result in removal from the athletic training room.
- Please leave all sports-related equipment, bags, etc outside of the ATR.
- Spikes and cleats are not to be worn in the ATR.
- Appropriate attire is expected in the ATR. Failure to do so will result in removal from the ATR.
- Please keep the ATR clean and orderly. Place dirty towels in the towel bin. Medical and rehabilitation equipment should be returned to its appropriate location.
- No rough housing will be permitted in the athletic training room. Failure to do so will result in removal from the ATR.

### **TIME-LINE FOR SUBMITTING PRE-PARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORMS**

Students who successfully participate in a physical examination performed by a private physician and who have resided in the Avonworth School District during the previous semester must submit a completed packet to the Athletic Trainer. This must be done by 4:00 pm on the Monday one week before the first official tryout/practice date in order to insure the athlete to be eligible to begin tryouts/practice on that first official date.

At no time will they be allowed to participate in any physical activity, drills, etc. until cleared by the trainer.

A student new to the Avonworth School District during the semester may submit a completed packet to the Athletic Director upon arrival to the District. It may be accepted after consultation with the coach of the particular sport desired. Considerations include the reasonable safety of the student-athlete, the opportunity to challenge for a position and the effect upon athletes already selected to the squad.

## **SECTION III. STUDENTS**

Students' habits and reactions as competitors and spectators determine the quality of sportsmanship, which reflects upon the reputation of their school. Therefore, it is recommended that they:

1. Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
2. Respect, cooperate and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
3. Help to control the unruly behavior of fellow students.
4. Respect the property of the school and the authority of school officials.
5. Show respect for an injured player when they are removed from the contest.
6. Never criticize coaches or players for the loss of a game.
7. Respect the judgment of game officials or referees.
8. Refrain from using obscene or vulgar language.
9. Respect the efforts of all participants (home or visitor).
10. Conduct yourself with proper respect during public address announcements and the playing of the National Anthem.
11. The school district has the right to restrict students from attending or participating in any athletic activities.

## **ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

### **P.I.A.A. ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

High school interscholastic sports programs in Pennsylvania are governed by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.). As a member district, we must follow the policies and regulations formulated by the association. Regulations include:

1. **AGE:** You may not have reached your 19th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year. (16th birthday where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 through 9 and 15<sup>th</sup> birthday where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 and 8.)
2. **AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS:** A pupil must be an amateur to be eligible to participate in a P.I.A.A. sponsored interscholastic athletic contest. You will lose your amateur status in a sport for at least a year if:

- A. You or your school, or an organization which you represent, or your parent or guardian, receives money or property for or related to your athletic ability, performance, participation or services.
  - B. You accept compensation for teaching, training or coaching in a sport. You may receive normal and customary compensation for acting as an instructor in or officiating recreational activities, or for serving as a lifeguard at swimming areas.
3. **ATTENDANCE:** A pupil must be regularly enrolled in a secondary school in full-time attendance. A pupil who has been absent from school for a total of twenty or more days in a semester shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until they have attended school for a total of sixty school days following the twenty days of absence. An exception may be considered by a district committee where there is an extended absence of five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury.
4. **PARTICIPATION AND GRADE REPETITION:** You will lose your eligibility when you have been in attendance more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade. If you repeat a grade after eight, you will be ineligible as a senior. You may participate only one season in each sport during each school year.
5. **OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION:** You will lose your eligibility in a sport for the remainder of the season if, while a member of your high school team, you participate in an athletic contest as an individual or a member of another team in the same sport during the same season, unless your school principal waives this rule by sending an appropriate letter to the P.I.A.A. Executive Director.
6. **ALL-STAR CONTESTS:** You will lose your eligibility in a sport for one year if you participate in an all-star contest in that sport.
7. **OUT-OF-SEASON PARTICIPATION:** Almost all P.I.A.A. sports have a defined season. If your team conducts and/or plays a contest after the concluding date for the P.I.A.A. season in a sport, you will lose your eligibility for one year in that sport.
8. **CONSENT OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN:** A pupil shall be eligible for participation in each sport only when there is on file with the principal a certificate of consent signed by a parent or guardian.
9. **HEALTH:** No pupil shall be eligible to represent the school in any interscholastic contest unless they have been examined by a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathy or by a certified nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant before you begin to practice for your first sports season of the academic year. Before each subsequent sports season of the same academic year you must be reexamined or certified that your condition is satisfactory before you begin to practice in the

sport.

Wrestlers must also obtain from the physician or certified weight assessor, prior to the beginning of practice, a certification of the minimum weight class at which they may wrestle for the entire season.

## **AVONWORTH ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

Students participating in PIAA sports shall adhere to PIAA rules in addition to District rules. Eligibility: In order to participate in any extracurricular activity or sport, students must have been in attendance in school no later than 10:30 am for High School and Middle School on the day of said activity. In cases of early dismissals, students must be in attendance at least 4½ hours. The only exceptions are physician or court issued excuses. These excuses must be signed by the physician or court officers and presented to the attendance secretary upon arrival. If these procedures are not followed, participation in sports and activities will not be permitted that day. Attendance at funerals, college visitations by juniors or seniors, and school-sponsored field trips are permitted and will not affect a student's ability to participate in sports or activities, however, notification beforehand is required.

A student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as a full-time student and must maintain acceptable grades in all classes in order to maintain eligibility. Eligibility is cumulative from the beginning of each grading period, and is reported on a weekly basis. In order to be eligible, a student cannot be failing more than one full-credit course at a time. Participation in athletic competition and/or extra-curricular activities is a privilege. It is expected that students will be positive role models and examples of good behavior. Students suspended in school or out of school for disciplinary infractions will not participate in or attend practice, games, or activities during the time of the suspension. The building Principals will have final jurisdiction regarding eligibility questions

### **INELIGIBILITY**

When declared ineligible from competition because of the inability to meet P.I.A.A. academic or attendance standards, a student-athlete may, with the approval of the head coach, attend and participate in practice/meetings or may accompany the team to competition (not in uniform). When declared ineligible for practice, meetings or competition because of inability to meet the Avonworth daily attendance requirement, a student-athlete may not participate in practice, meetings or competition for that day, nor accompany the team to any activity.

### **HOME-SCHOOLED STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Home-schooled secondary students residing within the Avonworth School District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. Each student shall be required to follow the rules of the team

and school, the policies of the Avonworth School District and the rules and regulations of the P.I.A.A.

Transportation to and from scheduled practices and events is the responsibility of the parents of the home-schooled students except where late bus transportation and team transportation are provided by the District.

### ***Procedures***

Parents of home-schooled students who wish to have their children participate in interscholastic athletics within the school district have the following responsibilities:

1. Register their children with the superintendent's office by March 15 of the school year previous to the one during which they wish to participate.
2. Submit completed P.I.A.A. physical forms, emergency card and other related forms to the District's athletic trainer before participation in tryouts, practices or competitions.
3. Prior to participation, verify with the superintendent's office the following conditions:
  - That their student was enrolled in and passed a minimum of four (4) full-year subjects during the last school year. This is the equivalent to four (4) credits.
  - That their student was not absent from instruction more than twenty (20) days during the previous semester unless eligible for exemption as stated in Article III, Section 2 of the P.I.A.A. By-laws.
  - That their student is enrolled in four (4) full-year, four (4) credit equivalent courses during the current school year.
4. After participation has begun, notify weekly or daily as directed the District's Athletic Director if the student does not meet Avonworth and P.I.A.A. eligibility requirements for academic or attendance reasons.
5. The Avonworth School District will perform the following responsibilities:
  - Announce and supervise the registration process. (District Office)
  - Announce physical exam information through email and website. (Athletic Trainer)
  - Contact parents of home-schooled students with information regarding Avonworth and P.I.A.A. Academic and attendance requirements for interscholastic eligibility. (Athletic Director)

- Furnish the name(s) and related information of any home-schooled students wishing to participate in interscholastic athletics for the school year to the appropriate coach (es). (Athletic Director)
- Contact registered parent(s)/student(s) with information about orientation meetings, schedules, tryouts, practices, etc. for the upcoming season. (Coaches)

## **COLLEGE RECRUITING**

Coaches are to provide assistance to student-athletes in their sport who have indicated a desire to participate in athletics at a post-secondary institution. All students deserve the best guidance possible in making college and/or career plans. The student-athlete belongs to a special population because the assistance they need must be provided by coaches, counselors, prospective college coaches and parents. In order to provide assistance to student-athletes and their parents, the Avonworth Athletic Department and the Avonworth Guidance Office will provide information on guidelines for the recruiting process.

Coaches should be aware that collegiate recruiting personnel will contact you and the Athletic Office seeking information about Avonworth student-athletes. In compliance with FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act), directory information about a student (name, address, phone number, honors and awards, etc.) may be disclosed to college recruiters as requested. However, if a student-athlete or their parents wish NOT to have this information given out, they may request so in writing to the Avonworth Athletic Office prior to the first day of official practice for your sport.

## **N.C.A.A. & N.A.I.A. ELIGIBILITY CENTERS**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization founded in 1906 that has established rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid, regulates college sports. The NCAA has three membership divisions – Division I, II and III. Institutions are members of one or another division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

If a high school student-athlete is planning to enroll in college as a freshman upon graduating from high school and they wish to participate in Division I or Division II sports, the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Center must certify them.

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) founded in 1937, offers both men and women the opportunity to compete at his or her highest level.



Both the Eligibility Centers for NCAA and NAIA will analyze the student-athlete's academic information and determine if they meet the initial-eligibility requirements. The certification process for student-athletes planning to enroll as college freshmen begin August 1<sup>st</sup> of the academic high school year. Eligibility Center forms are available in the high school guidance office. More information may be found at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) and [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org) as well as the school district website.

## **FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

Foreign Exchange students may be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. A foreign exchange or international student becomes eligible for a period of one year at the school which the student attends upon the determination of the District Committee that (1) the student is a foreign exchange or international student as defined in the PIAA By-Laws; and (2) the student and the host parents, on behalf of the student, have executed and submitted to the District Committee the official PIAA "Foreign Exchange/International Student Eligibility Agreement", and required accompanying documents (applicable visa and either PIAA Medical Examiner's Certificate or PA Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Pre-participation Sports Physical Evaluation form), by which the student and the host parents, on behalf of the student, each agrees that the student's eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics at a PIAA member school shall end at the conclusion of the student's one year of eligibility.

## **RESIDENCY – (SCHOOL BOARD POLICY #200)**

All students at Avonworth High School must be residents of the Avonworth School District in order to attend and participate in athletics.

Students may attend Avonworth High School if it can be shown that they will become resident within ninety (90) days from their first attendance. Tuition cost information can be obtained by contacting the Business Office.

At no time should a coach discuss athletic team matters with a student/parent who is not a resident of the Avonworth School District for the inquiry of transfer possibility. Transfers for athletic intent will not be approved by the PIAA and will result in loss of eligibility.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

### **SUSPENSION FROM A TEAM**

Suspensions from a team must be made by the Coach of the sport in consultation with the Athletic Director and Building Administrator. The Coach, Athletic Director and/or the

Administrator will confer with each other before action is taken. Causes for suspension include serious violations of team, department, school or District rules and policies.

If a student-athlete is under investigation for dismissal from a team, the Coach, Athletic Director, or Administrator may invoke a suspension until the investigation is complete. (If a student-athlete is under consideration for suspension from a team, they have the right to due process as explained in this document.)

### **DISMISSAL FROM A TEAM**

Removal of a student-athlete from a team may be made by the Coach of the sport in consultation with the Athletic Director and Building Administrator for severe or repeated violations of team, department, school or District rules and policies. The Coach, Athletic Director and/or the Administrator will confer with each other before action is taken.

If a student-athlete is under consideration for dismissal from a team, they have the right to due process as explained in this document.

Any student-athlete dismissed from a team will not be permitted to participate on another team during that sport's season. School board policy may further restrict a student's participation during that school year.

### **DUE PROCESS**

The following procedure has been developed by the Athletic Department to provide due process in the event a student is (under consideration) to be suspended or dismissed from a team:

The Coach, Athletic Director or Principal will notify the student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent/guardian of the possibility of a suspension/dismissal, its proposed date/time of effect, and the infraction detected that prompts the considered consequence. This notification may take place in person or by phone call. The student-athlete and their parent/guardian will then be afforded the opportunity to reply to the charge and present evidence. If requested, such a conference will be held immediately or as soon as possible to be mutually agreed upon by the school district official and the student-athlete and their parent/guardian.

- Nothing contained in this section denies a student or parent/guardian of their right to then appeal to the Avonworth Superintendent, School Board, or the Courts or to be represented by counsel at any stage of the process.

### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICE AND COMPETITION**

The Pennsylvania School Code and School Board Policy #204 govern school attendance.

The Board requires that school age students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly. The educational program offered by the district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

### **STUDENT PROCEDURES WHEN ABSENT**

- Parents are to call the school between 7:15 and 9:00 am to report their child's absence. This phone call will serve as official notice of the child's absence.

### **RELATIONSHIPS (COACH/STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT)**

An effective working relationship among the "athletic triangle" of coach, student-athlete and parent benefits the quality of each experience with the athletic endeavor and contributes significantly to the success of the entire team. Establishing this relationship requires that each of the three parties understands their role in the process and communicates openly and honestly with the other persons.

To open the communication channels the coaching staff is responsible for conducting a pre-season orientation meeting at which time they will cover topics such as the following:

- Introductions and related background experiences of the coaching staff and program support staff.
- General plans/goals for the upcoming season.
- PIAA, district, school, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations as covered in the Athlete's Student Handbook and team handouts.
- Locations and times of practices and competitions.
- Helpful tips on how parents can best support their child during the season.
- How to best reach the coach by phone or email and a confirmation of how to best reach each parent.
- Student-athletes and their parents are responsible for asking questions to clarify understanding of the topics discussed at the meeting or introduced in any other printed material such as the Student Handbook; confirming address, phone and e-mail information; and for informing the coaches of any expected conflicts in the schedule.

With this foundation in place, it is anticipated that two-way or three-way communication

between any of the parties can easily and respectfully be conducted throughout the season about a variety of topics. However, the most critical time for the working relationship to be employed is when a concern or conflict arises about an expectation or a previous understanding. Topics accepted as appropriate for discussion are the following:

- The student-athlete's academic performance.
- The student-athlete's behavior in school, with the team or in the general public as it pertains to the team's reputation.
- The student-athlete's role on the team.
- The application of PIAA, district, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations to a student-athlete.
- Suggestions to improve a student-athlete's acquiring of skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to the sport.
- Information about recruiting and recommendations about a student-athlete's suitability for play at different collegiate levels.
- Management of injuries incurred by the student-athlete.

There are also topics which may NOT be appropriate for discussion. These include certain prerogatives for which the coach alone has jurisdiction within the bounds of school district philosophies, regulations and policies:

- Other players' roles on the team
- Selection, placement and determination of playing time of personnel.
- Establishment and enforcement for all guidelines and training rules related to the activity.
- Appointment of practice times, dates and procedures.
- Preparation and execution of all travel arrangements for the team.
- Creation and enactment of competition strategies.
- Management of all awards.

In a time of question or conflict concerning an appropriate topic, the following procedures are to be followed in attempting to reach a resolution to the problem:

- Avoid telephone and e-mail discussions if possible. Speak face-to-face with the other individual(s) so that the most complete communication takes place.

- The first level of contact should always be between the student-athlete and coach at a time other than during an actual practice or competition. Speaking privately in the coach's office or in a place away from other team members is preferred.
- If the problem is not resolved at this primary level meeting, a conference among the coach, student-athlete and parent is in order. However, never attempt to confront a person immediately before or after a practice or contest to discuss the matter; always call or e-mail to set up an appointment. If a coach cannot be reached in this manner, contact the athletic office for assistance in reaching him/her.

If a resolution still is not gained after this conference, contact the athletic director for their input as to how to proceed. They will give due process and consideration to all of the involved parties while attempting to bring the matter to a reasonable conclusion.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND PROCEDURE**

Objective: Understanding that the school district's intention is to create sports and activities programs which provide enhancement to the participants. This process is intended to create a procedure to provide a consistent effort to address formal complaints made against a coach or director of an activity which have an unfair, negative effect or which represent a blatant disregard for the mission, goals and intention of the programs and the Avonworth School District.

1. A complainant will be instructed, at the first point of contact, as to the terms of number 4 below.
2. Only complaints made in writing will be considered valid.
3. Anonymous complaints will not be considered to be valid.
4. Complaints are to be made in writing to the Athletic Director and building Principal with any supporting, written documentation also provided at that time.
5. Complaints concerning playing time do not qualify as a formal complaint unless the action can be substantiated as malicious against a specific participant. The Athletic Director and building Principal will determine the validity of the complaint and acknowledge receipt, in writing to the complainant outlining the district procedure.
6. If a complaint as described in number 5 above cannot be substantiated by the Athletic Director and building Principal then the complainant will be encouraged to contact the coach directly for resolution.

### **DISTRICT PROCEDURE**

2. A copy of each valid complaint will be forwarded to the Athletic Director.

3. The Athletic Director will inform the appropriate party that a formal complaint has been made and that the student-athlete is to be permitted to participate in the activity, without prejudice or negative consequence, no matter what the issue until the Athletic Director completes his full investigation and issues a determination on the validity of the claim.
4. The complainant is to be notified in writing by the Athletic Director that number 2 above has been done.
5. The Athletic Director will then interview the employee and review all supporting documentation supplied by the complainant and make a determination as to the validity of the claim.
6. The complainant will then be notified, in writing, as to the findings of the Athletic Director.
7. If a complainant disagrees with the findings of the Athletic Director they will be asked for additional supporting documentation which will be considered by the Athletic Director. In absence of any further documentation or if upon review the determination made by the Athletic Director does not change, the complainant will be notified in writing that the matter is being dismissed without prejudice.
8. If a claim is determined to be valid by the Athletic Director then disciplinary action consistent with the district policy shall be instituted by the Principal and Athletic Director. In every case other than one which demands dismissal, the coach will be expected to meet with the Athletic Director and complainant as a means of demonstrating positive communication and good faith.
9. Any coach who retaliates against any participant as a result of a disciplinary action will be immediately dismissed.

## **SQUAD LIMITS AND SQUAD SELECTION**

Several sports teams have no squad limits; therefore, all students who try -out become part of the team. However, the nature of certain sports limits the number of team members who can be effectively and efficiently managed by the coaching staff and/or facilities. Coaches, as the designated professionals in charge of these sports, will make student-athletes aware of the criteria for selection, maintain records of try-out evaluations, and provide sufficient opportunity to fairly evaluate and rank student-athletes. Coaches of these sports will:

1. Provide a written copy of the selection process including criteria for selection to each candidate.

2. Maintain accurate records of observation and evaluation during each practice session.
3. Provide sufficient evaluation opportunities for each athlete over the duration of the tryout session to fairly evaluate candidates.
4. Immediately after sharing the results of try-outs, give a copy of the written documents regarding the selection process and final evaluations of all prospects to the Athletic Office for file.

It is essential that students be given the opportunity to discuss with the coaching staff reasons why they have not been selected for the team. Coaches **will not post a list**

**of names** of students who have not made the squad. Coaches should reach out privately to those who have made the team and those who have not. Coaches will also provide an opportunity for any student who does not make a team to meet and discuss their evaluation. Underclass students not selected for the team should be encouraged to try out for the team the next season and given feedback on areas for improvement.

Students not selected for a squad may be permitted to try-out for another sport during that season, provided the selection process for that team has not been completed and the head coach is agreeable to the tryout. Students not selected for a squad may join another sport team that has no participation limits no later than two days after notification of not being selected to the first squad.

When traveling to District, Regional and State tournaments, PIAA regulations regarding the maximum number of squad members to be admitted to a tournament site must be followed. In addition, student-athletes who are not in team uniform or who are not eligible to participate in play should not be included in the team travel party. No JV or non-tournament team student-athletes may be transported or put under the supervision of the coaching staff for the duration of the tournament.



